Mercy for the Worlds Series - No. 5

Forty Encounters
With the
Beloved Prophet ﷺ

His Life, Manners and Characteristics

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In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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In the name of Allah,

Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Introduction

Praise be to gracious Allah, who honoured us by sending Muhammad *ibn* `Abdullah ﷺ as a teacher, educator, leader and guide. As Allah ﷻ said in the *Qur'an:*

"Certainly did Allah confer [great] favour upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book [i.e., the Qur'an] and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error." (3:164)

And blessings and peace be upon the most noble and purest of creation, our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, a role model and leader of the righteous, seal of the prophets and messengers and a mercy for all the worlds. He was chosen by Allah ﷻ, who said:

"And your Lord creates what He wills and chooses." (28:68)

And He ﷻ said:

"Allah chooses messengers from among the angels and from among the people." (22:75)

So, He ﷻ sent him

"as a witness, a bringer of good tidings, a Warner, one who invites to Allah, by His permission, and an illuminating lamp." (33:45-46)

And Allah, (the Exalted),[1] has decreed honour, contentment and distinction for those who follow his path and decreed humiliation, misery and degradation for those who go against his order. So may the blessings and peace of our Lord be upon him as often as the righteous mention him and as long as night follows day.

It is agreed that no meeting or encounter could be more honourable than one with the Prophet ﷺ (blessings and peace be upon him)[2]. And although his companions (may Allah be pleased with them)[3] had the honour of meeting with him in this world and partaking of his teaching, instruction and education, Allah ﷻ, out of His mercy and generosity, has facilitated for us also a way to learn his biography, his *Sunnah*[4], his guidance and the features of his personality, which was characterized by extensive mercy, leniency, nobility, generosity and morality.

Some time back, the thought occurred to me to write some of these encounters in a brief and simple way in order to present Muslims with a glimpse of his life, his guidance and some of the aspects which made him a role model, thus aiding them to apply the words of Allah ﷻ:

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[1] From henceforth the Arabic symbol ﷻ will be used.
[2] From henceforth the Arabic symbol ﷺ will be used.
[3] From henceforth the Arabic symbol رضي الله عنه will be used.
[4] "*Sunnah*" in Islamic terminology means the divinely ordained way or method followed by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent model for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often." (33:21)

And *"And whatever the Messenger has given you – take; and what he has forbidden you – refrain from."* (59:7)

I have taken care not to weight these presentations down with a lot of extra notes that might distract the reader from grasping some of their objectives. I also took care to make them suitable for the imam of a mosque to read to his congregation or a teacher to read to his students.

I cannot forget to thank all those who contributed thought and effort toward producing the book in this form. Special thanks go to Brother *Khalid Abu Salih* for his great job in gathering and organizing the material and to *Muhammad at-Taabi`* for his review and corrections, as well as to *Imam Arafah*, owner of *Al-Fustat* Press, for typesetting and also his cooperation in reducing the cost of the book to assist those intending charitable distribution.

Indeed, I hope that everyone who reads these encounters will remember me in his prayers and contact me by e-mail to offer comments and suggestions at:

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I pray to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, to enable us all to fulfil the right of our Prophet ﷺ and to make us among those who serve his *Sunnah* and spread his noble guidance. And I pray that Allah ﷻ will increase us in honour and position in this world and the next by enabling us to follow the example of His Prophet ﷺ and that He will

grant us the Prophet's companionship in Paradise. May He make our deeds purely for His acceptance, and may His blessings and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and all of his family and companions.

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In the name of Allah,
Most Gracious, Most Merciful

First Encounter

Some Rights of the Prophet ﷺ – 1

Allah ﷻ has honoured us by sending Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and has favoured us by making known his message.

He said:

Certainly did Allah confer [great] favour upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book [i.e., the Qur'an] and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error. (3:164)

Indeed, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has many rights over us which we should observe, uphold and beware of neglecting. Among them are:

1. **Belief in him**

The first right of the Prophet ﷺ is belief in him and in his message, for whoever does not believe in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and that he is the last of the prophets and messengers is a disbeliever, even if he should believe in all of the prophets who came before him.

The Qur'an contains many verses commanding belief in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and in the message he brought. Therein Allah ﷻ has said:

So believe in Allah and His Messenger and the light [i.e., Qur'an] which We have sent down. (64:8)

And He said:

The believers are only those who have believed in Allah and His Messenger and then do not doubt. (49:15)

And He stated that disbelief in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger is a cause of destruction and painful punishment, saying:

That is because they opposed Allah and His Messenger. And whoever opposes Allah and His Messenger – indeed, Allah is severe in penalty. (8:13)

And the Prophet ﷺ himself said,

"By Him in whose hand is Muhammad's soul, no one from this nation or a Jew or a Christian will hear about me and then die without believing in that with which I was sent but that he will be of the inhabitants of the Hellfire." (Narrated by *Muslim*)

2. Following him

Following the Prophet ﷺ is the real evidence of belief in him. Anyone who claims faith in the Prophet ﷺ but then does not obey his order, cease what he prohibited and follow his *Sunnah* has lied about his faith. For faith is what has settled in the heart and is proven by deeds.

Allah ﷻ shows that His mercy is for the believers who follow the Prophet's ﷺ example. He said:

My mercy encompasses all things. So I will decree it [especially] for those who fear Me and give zakah and those who believe in Our verses – Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet... (7:156-157)

In addition, Allah ﷻ has promised a bad consequence for those who ignore the guidance of His Messenger ﷺ and oppose his instruction:

So let those beware who dissent from his order, lest trial strikes them or a painful punishment. (24:63)

And Allah ﷻ commanded wholehearted compliance with the Messenger's ﷺ judgement, saying:

But no, by your Lord, they will not [truly] believe until they make you, [O Muhammad], judge concerning that over which they dispute among themselves and then find within themselves no discomfort from what you have judged and submit in [full, willing] submission. (4:65)

3. Loving him

Among the rights of the Prophet ﷺ upon his nation is complete and perfect love for him.

He said, "*None of you [truly] believes until I am more beloved to him than his child, his parent and all people.*" (Al-Bukhari)

So any person who does not love the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cannot be a believer, even if he should have a Muslim name and live among Muslims.

The greatest degree of love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is to love him more than oneself. *`Umar ibn al-Khattab* ﷺ once said to him, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, you are more beloved to me than everything except myself.

" The Prophet ﷺ replied, *"No, by the one in whose hand is my soul – not until I am more beloved to you than yourself."*

Then *`Umar* ﷺ said, "Now, by Allah, you are more beloved to me than myself." So the Prophet ﷺ said,

"Now [you have believed], `Umar." (Al-Bukhari)

4. Supporting him

This is among the most clearly confirmed of his rights both in life and after death. During his lifetime his companions fulfilled this duty in the best way. After his death, however, supporting him entails defence of his *Sunnah* whenever it is exposed to attack by enemies, distortion by the ignorant or criticism by those who seek to annul it. It also includes the defence of his noble person whenever he might be abused, ridiculed or described in an unsuitable manner.

In recent times, there has been an increase in campaigns to dishonour and discredit the Prophet of Islam ﷺ. The entire *Ummah* (community of believers) must arise to the defence of its Prophet ﷺ by every means possible to force opponents to end their lies, insults and slander.

Second Encounter

Some Rights of the Prophet ﷺ – 2

We continue with the mention of rights of the Prophet ﷺ upon his followers:

5. Spreading his message

Loyalty to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ includes spreading his invitation to Islam throughout every part of the earth, because he ﷺ said,

"Convey from me, even if only one verse." (Al-Bukhari)

He ﷺ also said,

"That should Allah guide through you a single man is better for you than possessing red camels." [5] *(Al-Bukhari and Muslim)*

And he ﷺ stated,

"Through you [Muslims] I will have more numerous followers than [other] nations on the Day of Resurrection." (Ahmad)

Among the ways his nation will increase is through *da`wah*, or invitation to Allah ﷻ, which brings people into Islam. Allah ﷻ stated that invitation to Him has always been the occupation of the prophets and their followers. He ordered:

Say, "This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and those who follow me." (12:108)

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[5] Meaning the best of worldly possessions.

The Muslim *Ummah* must fulfil the duty for which Allah ﷻ raised it, which is *da`wah* and delivery of the message, enjoining right and forbidding wrong. As Almighty Allah has said:

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah. (3:110)

6. Revering him in life and death

This is among the rights which many people have neglected. In the *Qur'an*, Allah ﷻ said:

Indeed, We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a Warner, that you [people] may believe in Allah and His Messenger and honour him and respect him [i.e., the Prophet] and exalt Him [i.e., Allah] morning and afternoon. (48:8-9)

Ibn Sa`di explained: "To honour and respect the Messenger ﷺ means to revere him, hold him in esteem and fulfil his rights because of the great debt of gratitude you owe him."

The Prophet's ﷺ companions used to honour him, respect him and hold him in great esteem, so much that when he ﷺ spoke they would listen to him attentively, as if birds were perched on their heads. After Allah ﷻ had revealed:

O you who have believed, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet or be loud to him in speech like the loudness of some of you to others, lest your deeds become worthless while you perceive not (49:2),

Abu Bakr said, "By Allah, I will not speak to you after this except [softly] with facial expression."

As for respecting him after his death, it is by following his *Sunnah*, by deference to his order, by acceptance of his rulings, by courtesy toward his sayings and by not preferring any opinion or school of thought over his teachings. Imam ash-*Shafi`i* said, "All Muslim scholars agree that whoever has understood the *Sunnah* of Allah's Messenger ﷺ is not permitted to abandon it for the opinion of another."

7. Invoking Allah's blessings upon him[6] whenever he is mentioned

Allah has ordered believers to invoke blessings on him, saying:

Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace. (33:56)

And the Prophet ﷺ said,

"May the nose be rubbed in dirt of a man who, when I am mentioned before him, does not invoke blessings upon me." (Muslim)

And he ﷺ said,

"The closest of people to me on the Day of Resurrection will be the ones who invoked blessings on me the most." (At-*Tirmidhi* – graded as *Hasan by al-Albani*)

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[6] By saying, *"Sall-Allahu alayhi wa sallam"*, meaning: May Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.

And, *"The stingy one is he before whom I am mentioned and does not invoke blessings on me."* (Ahmad and at-*Tirmidhi* – graded as *Saheeh by al-Albani)*

It is indeed discourtesy for a Muslim to hear the mention of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and then be too miserly to invoke blessings on him. Imam *Ibn al-Qayyim* mentioned many of the benefits of invoking blessings on the Prophet ﷺ in his book entitled *"Jalaa' al-Afhaam fis-Salaati was-Salaami `ala Khayr il-Anaam"*.

8. Alliance with his allies and hatred of his enemies

Allah ﷻ has said:

You will not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having affection for those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even if they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred. (58:22)

Alliance to him also means alliance to his companions and love for them, devotion to them, acknowledgement of their rights, praising them, following their example, asking forgiveness for them, refraining from discussion of their disagreements and animosity toward their enemies and those who insult or defame them. And it means alliance to the members of his household, support and defence of them, but at the same time, avoiding excessive praise and exaggeration of their attributes.

And alliance to him includes love for the scholars of *Ahl as-Sunnah*, support of them and avoidance of disdaining or dishonouring them. And it includes animosity towards their

enemies among the disbelievers, the hypocrites and those who advocate innovation and error.

A man from among the latter group once said to *Ayyub as-Sakhtiyani*, "May I ask you about a word?" He turned away from him with a sign of his finger meaning, "Not even half a word," out of reverence for the Prophet's ﷺ *Sunnah* and enmity toward its enemies.

Third Encounter
The Prophet's Guidance in Ramadhan – 1

Imam *Ibn al-Qayyim* (may Allah have mercy upon him) said, "The guidance of Allah's Messenger ﷺ in Ramadhan was the most complete and perfect for achieving the desired objective with ease. Fasting *Ramadhan* was made obligatory in the second year following the *Hijrah,*[7] so at his death he ﷺ had fasted nine *Ramadhans.*

At first, the choice was given between fasting and feeding a poor person for each day, and then the choice was abrogated and fasting was required. Feeding the poor remained an option only for the elderly man and woman who fast with difficulty; they were allowed to feed the poor for each day missed. Sick and travelling persons were permitted to break the fast and make up the missed days later. The same applied to pregnant or nursing women if they feared harm to themselves. But if they feared harm to the child, they had to feed the poor in addition to making up the days. That is because, in this case breaking the fast occurs whilst healthy and not due to fear of illness; hence, it is compensated by feeding the poor as healthy people did at the beginning of Islam.

Increase in Worship

The Prophet ﷺ used to intensify his acts of worship during *Ramadhan.* The angel *Jibreel* (Gabriel) would meet with him in this month to review the *Qur'an.* And when

[7] The Prophet's ﷺ emigration from *Makkah to Madinah.*

Jibreel met him he ﷺ was faster than the wind in doing good deeds. He ﷺ was the most generous of people; but he ﷺ was more generous than ever in *Ramadhan,* wherein he ﷺ increased charities, acts of kindness, recitation of the *Qur'an*, prayer, mention of Allah ﷻ and seclusion in the *masjid.* He ﷺ used to worship during *Ramadhan* more than in any other month, and sometimes would continue fasting throughout the night in order to make use of the time for worship. He ﷺ prohibited his companions from doing so, however, and when they said to him, "But you continue through the night,"

He ﷺ would say, *"You are not like me. I remain with my Lord who gives me food and drink."*

He ﷺ forbade them from continuing their fast all night out of mercy to his *Ummah*, and allowed them to continue only to the hours before dawn.

In *Saheeh al-Bukhari*, *Abu Sa`eed al-Khudri* ؓ reported that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say,

"Do not continue fasting all night. Anyone who wishes to may continue until the hours before dawn."

That is easier on the fasting person and actually takes the place of his dinner, although at a later time. One who fasts has one meal, so if he eats it before dawn he has only shifted it from the beginning of the night to the end.

His Guidance in Confirming the Month

He ﷺ would begin the fast of *Ramadhan* only after a verified sighting of the new moon or the evidence of one

Muslim witness. He ﷺ fasted on the testimony of *Ibn `Umar* ﷺ , and once on the testimony of a Bedouin. He depended on their information and did not make the witness pronounce the *shahadah*. In case the moon was not sighted and without any witness, he would complete *Sha`baan* as thirty days and then begin fast.

He ﷺ did not begin fasting on a cloudy day, nor did he order it. Rather, he ﷺ ordered the completion of *Sha`baan* as thirty days when it was cloudy. That was his practice and what he ordered, and it does not contradict his saying,

"If it is overcast, estimate it." (*Al-Bukhari and Muslim*) For an estimate is one's calculation, and it means: complete the month when it is overcast, as stated in the hadith saying, *"Complete the days of Sha`baan."* (*Al-Bukhari*)

His Guidance in Ending the Month

He ﷺ ordered people to fast on the testimony of one Muslim man and terminated the fast based on the testimony of two witnesses. If two witnesses gave testimony about sighting the moon after the *Eid* prayer time had passed, he would break his fast and order people to do so. Then he would perform the *Eid* prayer at its time the following morning.

Fourth Encounter

The Prophet's Guidance in Ramadhan – 2

Imam *Ibn al-Qayyim* continued,

"The Prophet ﷺ used to hasten to break the fast [at sunset] and ordered the people to do so. He ﷺ also used to delay his *suhoor*[8] and encourage others to do the same.

He ﷺ would encourage breaking the fast on dates and if there were none, on water. This was out of consideration for his *Ummah*, as the empty stomach is naturally more accepting of something sweet, and it strengthens the body's functions, especially the eyesight. In Madinah, dates were the customary sweets; when dried they were food and provision and when fresh they were fruit. As for water, the liver becomes dehydrated during fasting. So when it is first moistened with water it operates more effectively when food follows. Therefore, it is best for one who is hungry and thirsty to begin with a little water before his food. This is in addition to the particular properties of dates and water which have a beneficial effect on the heart, something recognized only by heart specialists.

With the Prophet ﷺ at the Time of Breaking His Fast

He ﷺwould break his fast before praying the *maghrib* prayer. He ﷺ would break his fast with fresh dates or, if unavailable, with dry dates; and if he ﷺ had none, with a

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[8]. A pre-dawn meal for those intending to fast

few sips of water. It is reported that upon breaking his fast he ﷺ would say:

"Thirst has gone, the veins have been moistened and the reward is assured, if Allah wills." (*Abu Dawud*)

And he ﷺ said,

"Indeed, the supplication of a fasting person at the time of breaking his fast is not refused." (*Ibn Majah*)

He ﷺ is also authentically reported to have said,

"When the night has come and the day has gone the one fasting has broken his fast." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

An explanation of this is that the fast is broken according to law whether or not the person intended it since the time for that has arrived.

Manners During Fasting

He ﷺ prohibited the fasting person from sex and improper speech, from noisy arguments, insults and from responding to them. He instructed that if one is cursed or insulted he should only say,

"I am fasting." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Some scholars mentioned that he should say it with his tongue, which is most likely. Others said it is within his heart – to remind himself that he is fasting. And yet others said that during obligatory fasting he should say it with his tongue but during voluntary fasting in his heart because that is farther away from showing off.

His Guidance for Travel during Ramadhan

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ travelled in Ramadhan and sometimes observed fasting and sometimes broke his fast. He ﷺ gave his companions the option to do either, but he ﷺ would order them to break their fast when they approached an enemy in order to be strong for battle. When the journey did not involve *jihad*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ told them it was facilitation, so whoever took advantage of it – it was good, and whoever preferred to fast was not to be blamed. He travelled in Ramadhan for two of the greatest campaigns: that of *Badr* and the conquest of *Makkah.*

It was not of his guidance to designate a specific distance beyond which a traveller could break his fast, and nothing authentic was related in this regard. When setting out on a journey his companions did not stipulate passing beyond the town's residential area as this was not from the *Sunnah.*

Ubayd ibn Jabr reported: "I boarded a ship from Fustat with Abu Basrah al-Ghifari, a companion of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, during *Ramadhan.* We had not yet left the settlement behind when he called for a meal, saying, 'Come.' I said, 'Don't you see the houses?' *Abu Basrah* said, 'Are you disinclined to the *sunnah* of Allah's Messenger ﷺ ?'" (*Ahmad and Abu Dawud*)

Muhammad ibn Ka`b said, "I went to *Anas ibn Malik* ؓ in Ramadhan. He intended to travel so his camel had been prepared and he had worn his travelling clothes. He ordered some food and ate, so I said to him, 'Is it a *sunnah*?' He said, 'It is a *sunnah*,' and mounted." (*At-Tirmidhi*)

These narrations clearly show that whoever begins a journey during a day of Ramadhan may break the fast.

Fifth Encounter

The Prophet's Guidance in Ramadhan – 3

His guidance was also that if he ﷺ was in a state of sexual impurity at the break of dawn he ﷺ would perform *ghusl*[9] after the *fajr adhan* and observe the fast. And he ﷺ might kiss one of his wives while fasting in *Ramadhan*[10] and compared it to rinsing the mouth with water.

His Guidance Concerning Eating or Drinking Out of Forgetfulness

He ﷺ ruled that a fasting person need not make up the day if he ate or drank out of forgetfulness, saying that it was Allahﷻ who had fed him and given him drink. So one is not held responsible for that food and drink and it does not break his fast since it is only broken by what he does deliberately. It is like eating or drinking in one's sleep, and the acts of someone asleep or someone who has forgotten are not accountable.

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[9]. A complete bath

[10] The scholars dislike kissing during fasting for those who cannot control themselves.

What Breaks or Invalidates the Fast

The Prophet ﷺ stated that the fast is broken by deliberate eating or drinking,[11] drawing blood (cupping) and vomiting.

The *Qur'an* states that sexual intercourse invalidates the fast, as does eating and drinking, and there is no disagreement over this.

He ﷺ did not mention anything about applying *kohl,* but it is reported that he ﷺ would use the tooth stick (*miswak*) while fasting. And he ﷺ did not forbid using the *miswak* no matter whether early or late in the day. Imam Ahmad mentioned that he ﷺ would pour water on his head while fasting. And he ﷺ used to take water into his mouth and nose while fasting but warned people not to take it too deeply into the mouth. Imam Ahmad also said that he ﷺ would not have himself cupped while fasting.

His Guidance in *I`tikaaf*[12]

He ﷺ performed *i`tikaaf* regularly during the last ten days of *Ramadhan* until his death. Once he ﷺ missed it in *Ramadhan* but made up the days during the month of *Shawwal.*

He ﷺ once did *i`tikaaf* in the first ten days of Ramadhan, then in the middle ten days, then in the last ten days, seeking *Laylatul-Qadr.* After that it became clear to him

[11] Including what is similar, such as smoking and injections for nourishment.
[12] Seclusion in *the masji*d for worship.

that it comes within the last ten days, so he continued to do it then until he ﷺ died.

He ﷺ used to order that a tent be set up for him in the mosque in which to seclude himself with his Lord. When intending *i`tikaaf*, he ﷺ would begin it after performing the *fajr* prayer.

He ﷺ used to perform *i`tikaaf* ten days every year, and in the year before he ﷺ died he ﷺ did it for twenty days. Angel *Jibreel* would come to hear his recitation of the *Qur'an* once every year, but in his final year he ﷺ came to hear it twice. And *Jibreel* would recite it to him every year but recited it to him twice that year.

When he ﷺ performed *i`tikaaf* he would enter his tent alone. He ﷺ would only go to his house for answering a call of nature. From the *masjid* he used to put his head into *Aisha's* room for her to comb and wash his hair, even when she had her menses.

One of his wives would visit him during his *i`tikaaf*, and when she would get up to leave he ﷺ would stand up and accompany her to the door, and that was at night. He ﷺ did not have sexual relations with any of his wives during *i`tikaaf*, neither kissing nor anything else.

During *i`tikaaf* he ﷺ would have his mattress and bed put in the place where he ﷺ stayed. When he ﷺ went out to relieve himself he might pass a sick person on the way and not stop or ask about him.

Once he ﷺ performed *i`tikaaf* in a Turkish tent and placed a straw mat over its entry in order to achieve the

objective and spirit of *i`tikaaf* (seclusion). This is in contrast to the practice of ignorant people who make it a place for gathering friends and visitors to converse among themselves. Theirs is one way, but the *i`tikaaf* of the Prophet ﷺ was another. And Allah ﷻ is the giver of success.

Sixth Encounter

His Noble Lineage

He ﷺ was *Abul-Qasim*, Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib ibn Hashim ibn `Abdi Manaf ibn Qusayy ibn Kilab ibn Murrah ibn Ka`b ibn Lu'ay ibn Ghalib ibn Fihr ibn Malik ibn an-Nadhr ibn Kinanah ibn Khuzaymah ibn Mudrikah ibn Ilyas ibn Mudhar ibn Nizar ibn Ma`add ibn Adnan. This is the consensus of the scholars, who also agreed that Adnan was the descendant of Prophet Isma`eel (peace be upon him).

His Names

Jubayr ibn Mut`im reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

"I have certain names: I am Muhammad, I am Ahmad, I am al-Mahi (the Eliminator) through whom Allah eliminates disbelief, I am al-Hashir (the Gatherer) at whose feet people will be gathered, and I am al-`Aaqib (the Last) after whom will be no other." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And *Abu Musa al-Ash`ari* reported: "The messenger of Allah ﷺ named himself some names. He ﷺ said,

'I am Muhammad, Ahmad, al-Muqaffi (the Final), al-Hashir (the Gatherer), the Prophet of Repentance and the Prophet of Mercy." (Muslim)

His Pure Origin

This is something which needs no proof, for he ﷺ was the chosen one from *Bani Hashim* and from the descendants

of *Quraysh*. So he ﷺ is the most noble of the Arabs in lineage; and he ﷺ was from *Makkah*, the most beloved city to Allahﷻ, who said:

Allah knows best where He places His message. (6:124)

Before he accepted Islam, *Abu Sufyan* admitted the excellent lineage and nobility of the Prophet ﷺ when he was asked by *Heraclius* about his ancestry. He replied, "He is of high lineage among us." *Heraclius* said, "And that is how messengers are sent among their peoples." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, *"Allah, the Mighty and Majestic chose Isma`eel from the sons of Ibraheem and chose Kinanah from the sons of Isma`eel and chose Quraysh from the sons of Kinanah and chose Bani Hashim from Quraysh and chose me from Bani Hashim."* (Muslim)

Allahﷻ kept his parents from falling into fornication; thus, he ﷺ was born of a valid marriage and not out of wedlock.

He ﷺ said,

"I came out of marriage, not fornication, from [the time of] Adam until my father and mother produced me, and I was not at all affected by the promiscuity of the [pre-Islamic] days of ignorance." (At-Tabarani – graded as *hasan* by al-Albani)

And he ﷺ said,

"I came from [the time of] Adam through marriage and not fornication." (Ibn Sa`d – graded as *hasan* by al-Albani)

Ibn Sa`d and Ibn Asaakir related that *al-Kalbi* said, "I recorded for the Prophet ﷺ five hundred mothers, and did not find any promiscuity among them or anything of the practices of the days of ignorance." By "mothers" he meant grandmothers, great grandmothers, etc. from both his father's and mother's side.

A poet said:

From the time of Adam the loins and wombs kept protecting his lineage
Until he was transferred in pure marriage; no two had met in what was unlawful.
He appeared as a full moon the night of his birth, unblemished by the darkness.
Darkness's vanished at his bright lights, for light will not let any darkness remain.
Thanks to Him who gave us this blessing whose nature is not within an illusion.

Seventh Encounter

His Truthfulness and Trustworthiness

The Prophet ﷺ was well-known among his people for honesty before his *prophethood,* and used to be called "al-*Ameen*" (the Trustworthy). This is a name that would not be given except to one who was extremely truthful, trustworthy and upright.

Even his enemies testified to this. *Abu Jahl*, in spite of his hatred for the Prophet ﷺ and denial of him, knew that he was truthful. A man asked him, "Is Muhammad truthful or is he a liar?" He replied, "Woe to you! By Allah, Muhammad is truthful and he has never told a lie. But, if the sons of *Qusayy* acquire the standard, the distribution of water for pilgrims, the custodianship of the *Ka`bah* and *prophethood,* what will be left for the rest of the *Quraysh*?"

And *Abu Sufyan*, who before accepting Islam was the most adamant enemy of the Prophet ﷺ, was asked by Heraclius, "Did you ever accuse him of lying before he said what he said?" *Abu Sufyan* said, "No." So *Heraclius* concluded, "I knew from what you told me that he would not have refrained from lying to people and then lie about Allahﷻ."

And his wife, *Khadijah* ﵂, when the Prophet ﷺ came back to her, trembling and saying, "Wrap me up," after revelation first descended upon him in the cave of *Hiraa*', said to him, "Good tidings! No, by Allah, Allah will never

humiliate you. For you keep ties with relatives and you speak the truth..." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Ibn `Abbas ﷺ reported: "After the verse *'And warn your closest kinsmen'*[13] was revealed, The Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out, climbed the hill of *Safa* and shouted to get their attention. They said, "What's this?" and gathered before him. He addressed them, saying,

"If I was to inform you that horsemen were in the valley behind this hill ready to attack you, would you believe me?"

They replied, "Yes, for we have never known you to lie". He ﷺ said,

"*Indeed, I am a Warner to you of severe punishment.*" (*Al-Bukhari and Muslim*)

The honesty and integrity of the Prophet ﷺ caused the polytheists confusion over how to describe him. Sometimes they would say he was a lying magician, sometimes a poet, sometimes a soothsayer and sometimes that he was mad; and they would express disapproval of one another over this because they all knew that these were not attributes of the Prophet ﷺ.

An-Nadr ibn al-Harith, who severely abused the Prophet ﷺ, said to the *Quraysh*, "You are being afflicted with something the likes of which you have never experienced. As a young man, Muhammad was the most intelligent, truthful and trustworthy among you. But when you noticed grey hairs at his temples and he conveyed to you what he

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[13] *Qur'an* - (26:214).

conveyed, you called him a magician. No, by Allah, he is not a magician. And you called him a soothsayer. No, by Allah, he is not a soothsayer. And you called him a poet. No, by Allah, he is not a poet. And you said he was mad... O company of *Quraysh*! Look into this matter of yours, for by Allah, you have been afflicted with something tremendous."

The Prophet's ﷺ integrity was the actual cause of *Khadijah's* wish to be his wife. He was in charge of her business transactions in Syria and she learned from her servant, *Maysarah*, of his honesty and noble manners.

The greatest trust carried by the Prophet ﷺ and fulfilled by him to the utmost degree was that concerning the revelation and the message that Allah ﷻ had charged him with conveying to the people. He ﷺ conveyed it and fulfilled his trust in the most complete and perfect way. He ﷺ opposed the enemies of Allah ﷻ with irrefutable evidence and then by the sword, so Allah ﷻ granted him conquests and opened hearts to his invitation. People believed in him, aided and supported him until the word of *tawheed* (*La ilaha ill-Allah*) became dominant and Islam spread eastward and westward. There remained not a single house but that Allah ﷻ had caused His religion to enter it.

May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon the truthful and trustworthy Prophet ﷺ, who strove for the cause of Allah ﷻ with the striving it deserved until he was finally taken by death.

Eighth Encounter

The Covenant and the Prophets' Foretelling of Muhammad

Allahﷻ said in the *Qur'an:*

And [recall, O People of the Scripture], when Allah took the covenant of the prophets, [saying], "Whatever I give you of the Scripture and wisdom and then there comes to you a messenger confirming what is with you, you must believe in him and support him." [Allah] said, "Have you acknowledged and taken upon that My commitment?" They said, "We have acknowledged it." He said, "Then bear witness, and I am with you among the witnesses." And whoever turned away after that – they were the defiantly disobedient. (3:81-82)

Ali ibn Abi Talib ؓ and his cousin, *Ibn `Abbas* ؓ, both said, " Allahﷻ did not send a single prophet ﷺ except that He took from him the promise that if Allahﷻ should send Muhammad ﷺ during his lifetime he would believe in him and support him; and He ordered him to take the pledge from his nation that if Muhammad ﷺ was sent while they were alive they would believe in him and support him."[14] *As-Suddi* related something similar.

And Allahﷻ quoted the supplication of Prophet *Ibraheem:* ؑ[15]

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[14] Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 1/493
[15] Abraham.

"Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise." (2:129)

Ibn Katheer commented: " Allah ﷻ mentions the invocation of *Ibraheem* ﷺ for the people of the *Haram* [in *Makkah]* asking that He send among them a messenger from themselves, i.e., from the descendants of *Ibraheem* ﷺ. This invocation was according to what Allah ﷻ had predestined concerning the appointment of Muhammad ﷺ as a messenger among the gentiles, to them and to all other races of mankind and jinn.

Imam Ahmad related from *`Al-Irbaadh ibn Sariah* that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

"I was to Allah the seal of the prophets while Adam was still clay, and I shall inform you of its beginning: it was the supplication of my ancestor, Ibraheem, tidings of me from `Isa, son of Maryam[16] *and the dream which my mother saw; that is what the mothers of prophets see in dreams."*

He ﷺ continued to be mentioned among the people until the seal of the prophets of *Bani Isra'eel, `Isa*, ﷺ spoke his name when he stood and addressed them, saying,

[16] Jesus, son of Mary.

"Indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad."[17] (61:6)

That is why the hadith said,

"the supplication of my ancestor, Ibraheem and tidings from `Isa, son of Maryam."[18]

The mention of his excellent qualities and deeds in the early scriptures are confirmed by the words of Allah ﷻ:

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil and relieves them of their burden[19] *and the shackles which were upon them.*[20] (7:157)

`Ataa ibn Yasaar* reported: I met *`Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`Aas ؓ and said, "Inform me about the description of Allah's Messenger ﷺ in the Torah." He said, "Yes, by Allah, he is described in the Torah with the same description as in the *Qur'an*:

17 Another name of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

18 *Tafseer Ibn Katheer,* 1/243.

19 Difficulties in religious practice.

20 Extreme measures previously required for repentance.

O Prophet, indeed We have sent you as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a Warner, (33:45) and also as a sanctuary for the gentiles.

[Allah said:] 'You are My servant and My messenger; I have called you al-*Mutawakkil* (the dependant on Allah).' He is not rude or harsh, nor is he noisy in the marketplaces. He does not compensate a bad deed with another; rather, he pardons and forgives. Allah will not cause him to die until he has amended the altered religion through him with their saying, '*La ilaha ill-Allah*.' Blind eyes, deaf ears and closed hearts will be opened by him." (*Al-Bukhari*)

Al-Bayhaqi narrated from *Ibn `Abbas* ﷺ: "*Al-Jarud ibn* `Abdullah ﷺ came and accepted Islam. He said to the Prophet ﷺ, 'By Him who sent you with the truth, I found your description in the Gospel. The virgin's son (i.e., Jesus ﷺ son of Mary) gave tidings of you.'"

And Abu *Musa al-Ash`ari* ﷺ reported that an-*Najashi* said, "I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and that the one who gave tidings of him was Jesus. If not for my preoccupation with the affairs of the kingdom and the responsibility I carry for the affairs of my people, I would have come to him to carry his shoes." (*Abu Dawud*)

Ninth Encounter

The Prophet of Mercy – 1

Mercy toward His Enemies

The Prophet ﷺ was a mercy for all humanity. Allah ﷻ described him as such, saying:

"And We did not send you [O Muhammad] but as a mercy to the worlds." (21:107)

And the Prophet ﷺ himself said, *"Indeed, I was sent as a mercy."* (Muslim)

His mercy ﷺ was a general mercy which included the believer and the non-believer. When *Tufayl ibn `Amr ad-Dausi* ؓ gave up hope on the guidance of his tribe he went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the tribe of *Daus* has disobeyed and refused so supplicate to Allah ﷻ against them." The Prophet ﷺ faced the *Qiblah* and raised his hands, and the people were certain that *Daus* would be destroyed when he supplicated against them. But the Prophet ﷺ of mercy only said,

"O Allah, guide Daus and bring them [to Islam]." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

He ﷺ supplicated for their guidance and not for their punishment or destruction because he ﷺ only wished good for people and hoped for their success and salvation.

The Prophet ﷺ went to *Taif* to invite its people to Islam but they met him with denial and ridicule and

encouraged street boys to throw stones at him until his feet bled. His wife, *`A'ishah*, related what happened after that: "I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ if he ever had a day more difficult than that of the battle of *Uhud*. He ﷺ said,

'I endured much from your people, and the worst I endured from them was the day of al-`Aqabah when I offered myself to Ibn `Abdi Ya Layl ibn `Abdi Kulal. He did not respond as I had wished, so I left, absorbed in my worries, and did not come around until I had reached Qarn ath-Tha`alib. I raised my head and found that a cloud had shaded me; I looked and there was Jibreel within it. He called to me, "Indeed, Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has heard what your people say to you and how they respond to you. He has sent you the angel of the mountains, so order him to do whatever you wish to them." The angel of the mountains addressed me, saying, "O Muhammad! Indeed, Allah has heard what your people say to you and how they respond to you. I am the angel of the mountains and Allah has sent me to you to order me to do whatever you wish. If you wish, I will crush them between the two mountains." But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, *"Rather, I hope that Allah will bring forth from their loins those who will worship Allah alone without any partner and not associate anything with Him."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

This was the mercy which enabled the Prophet ﷺ to forget his bleeding wounds and broken heart, only thinking of how to bring good to those people and bring them out from darkness into the light and guide them to the straight path.

And when the Prophet ﷺ conquered *Makkah*, entering it with ten thousand warriors, Allah ﷻ gave him the decision concerning those who had abused and persecuted him,

plotted his assassination, expelled him from his homeland, killed his companions and tortured them because of their religion. One of his companions said, "Today is a day of massacre." But the Prophet ﷺ said,

"No, but today is a day of mercy."

Then he ﷺ went before the defeated people whose eyes were wide with fear and whose hearts were trembling, waiting to see what the victorious conqueror would do with them. Their own custom was that of betrayal, vengeance and mutilation of those killed, as they had done to the Muslims in the battle of *Uhud* and elsewhere. But the Prophet ﷺ said to them,

"O Quraysh, what do you suppose I should do with you?"

They replied, "What is good. You are a generous brother and the son of a generous brother." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied, *"Go, for you are free."* They felt as if they had been retrieved from their graves.

Such an all-inclusive pardon was the result of mercy in the Prophet's ﷺ heart, which was so great that it included those enemies who had harmed him and his companions most. If not for his mercy such a pardon could not have occurred. How true were the words of the Prophet ﷺ when he said,

"I am but a bestowed mercy." (Al-Hakim)

Tenth Encounter

The Prophet of Mercy – 2

His Mercy Toward Animals and Immobile Things

We have mentioned that the prophetic mercy included not only the monotheistic Muslim but the disbeliever as well. Here we may add that the Prophet's ﷺ mercy went beyond humanity to include animals and even inanimate things. He ﷺ said,

"While a man was walking he became very thirsty, so he descended into a well and drank from it. When he came out he found a dog panting and eating the soil due to thirst. He said, 'This creature is suffering what I suffered,' so he went down again, filled his shoe and climbed up holding it in his mouth to give drink to the dog. Allah appreciated that from him and forgave his sin."

His companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, is there a reward in [kindness to] animals?" He ﷺ replied,

"In every living creature is reward." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

By this principle, *"in every living creature is reward"*, the Prophet ﷺ was the forerunner of all organizations and associations for the protection of animal rights and kindness to them. He ﷺ preceded them by hundreds of years when he ﷺ said,

"A woman was punished on account of a cat. She confined it until it died and entered the Hellfire because of it. She neither fed it nor allowed it to search for its own food." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

By this the Prophet ﷺ meant to teach his companions kindness to animals and good treatment of them and to show them that killing an animal unlawfully or causing its death could lead one to enter the Hellfire. This is something unknown in man-made laws which govern people today.

And he ﷺ warned against killing an animal without reason, saying,

"No person kills a bird or anything larger without right but that Allah will ask him about it on the Day of Resurrection." Someone asked, "O Messenger of Allahﷺ, what is its right?" He ﷺ said,

"Its right is that one slaughters it to be eaten and not merely cuts off its head and throws it away." (*An-Nasa'i*)

The Prophet ﷺ also ordered kindness when slaughtering. He ﷺ said,

"Indeed, Allah has decreed ihsaan (precision) for all things. So when you kill, kill well; and when you slaughter, slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade, and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters." (Muslim)

One scholar mentioned that some westerners had accepted Islam when they learned about the Islamic manner of slaughter, which points to the perfection of this religion in every aspect. All praise and thanks are due to Allahﷻ.

And Allah's Messenger ﷺ said,

"Do not take anything in which has a soul as a target."

(*Al-Bukhari and Muslim*)

He ﷺ meant not to make a living animal a target to shoot at as that is contrary to the mercy which should be part of the believer's character. He ﷺ used to prohibit injustice and oppression to animals and was much concerned with this matter. Once he ﷺ entered a garden belonging to a man from the *Ansar*. There he found a camel, and when it saw the Prophet ﷺ it moaned and its eyes shed tears. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ approached and stroked its head and it became quiet. He ﷺ said,

"Who is the owner of this camel?" An *Ansari* youth said, "I am, O Messenger of Allah. So the Prophet ﷺ said,

"Will you not fear Allah concerning this beast of which Allah has given you ownership? Indeed, it has complained to me that you starve and exhaust it." (Abu *Dawud* – graded as *saheeh* by al-*Alban*i)

Even trees had a share in the mercy of Muhammad ﷺ. *Al-Bukhari* narrated that when the Prophet's ﷺ pulpit was built, a palm tree by which he ﷺ used to give his sermon cried out like a child. The Prophet ﷺ descended from the pulpit and hugged it, and it moaned as a child does when being quietened. He ﷺ said,

"It wept at no longer being able to hear the reminder." When al-*Hasan* related this hadith he wept and said, "O Muslims, a piece of wood longed to be with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and you are more worthy to long for him."[21]

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[21] Fat·h al-Bari 6/602

Eleventh Encounter

Some Merits of the Prophet

You should know that our Prophet's ﷺ merits and distinctions are many. Among them are:

1. The noble manners and fine qualities for which Allahﷻ praised him when He said:

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character." (68:4)

The Prophet ﷺ himself said,

"I have been sent to perfect the noble traits of character." (At-*Tabarani)*

2. Mercy and compassion for his *Ummah* and toward all people for which Allahﷻ praised him, saying:

And We have not sent you [O Muhammad] except as a mercy to the worlds. (21:107) And he has been merciful to the believers. (33:43) So by mercy from Allah, you [O Muhammad] were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. (3:159)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, *"I am but a bestowed mercy."* (Al-Hakim – graded as saheeh by al-Albani)

Allah'sﷻ care for him from the time of his birth, as He said:

Did He not find you an orphan and give [you] refuge? And He found you lost and guided [you]. And He found you poor and made [you] self-sufficient. (93:6-8)

3. Allah's ﷻ mention of expanding his breast[22] and exalting his reputation:

Did We not expand for you your breast? And We removed from you your burden which had weighed upon your back and We raised high for you your repute. (94:1-4)

4. His ﷺ being the "Seal of the Prophets" as Allah ﷻ said: *Muhammad is not the father of [any] one of your men, but [he is] the Messenger of Allah and seal [i.e., last] of the prophets.* (33:40) The Prophet ﷺ explained:

"The example of me and the prophets before me is like a man who built a house. He did it well and completed it except for the place of a brick at one of the corners. People began to walk around it and wonder at the building, saying, 'Shouldn't a brick be placed here to complete your building?' I am that brick." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

5. His distinction over other prophets, as he ﷺ said,

"I was favoured over the other prophets in six ways: I was given concise but comprehensive speech, I am supported with terror [in the hearts of my enemies], war booty has been made lawful for me, the earth has been made for me a means of purification and place of prayer, I have been sent to all creation and the prophets are ended with me." (Muslim)

6. He ﷺ is the most righteous of creation and most honourable, as evidenced in the hadith saying,

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22 i.e., enlightening, assuring and gladdening his heart with guidance.

"I am Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib. Allah, the Exalted created the creation and placed me among the best of them; then He made them into two groups and placed me in the best group; then He made them into tribes and placed me in the best tribe; then He made them into families and placed me in the best family. So I am the best of you in family and the best of you as an individual." (Ahmad and Abu Dawud – graded as saheeh by al-Albani)

7. He ﷺ is the owner of the Pool and the intercessor on the Day of Resurrection. For he ﷺ said,

"I will be at the Pool before you, awaiting you. Some men from among you will be brought up to me until, when I have recognized them, they will be removed from me. I will say, 'My Lord, my companions!' But it will be said to me, 'Indeed, you do not know what they innovated after you.'" (Al-Bukhari)

The Prophet ﷺ also said,

"For every prophet is a supplication which he made and was answered, but I have saved my supplication to be intercession for my Ummah on the Day of Resurrection." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

8. He ﷺ will be the people's ﷺ leader on the Day of Resurrection, as he ﷺ said,

"I will be the leader of the children of Adam on the Day of Resurrection, without pride; and in my hand will be the standard of praise, without pride. There will be no prophet, not Adam or any other, but that he will be under my standard, and I will be the first to intercede and the first intercessor, without pride." (Ahmad and at-Tirmidhi – graded as saheeh by al-Albani)

9. He ﷺ will be the first to enter Paradise on the Day of Resurrection. He ﷺ said,

"I will be the first to knock on the door of Paradise, and the keeper will say, 'Who are you?' I will say, 'I am Muhammad.' So he will say, 'I shall stand up and open for you. I have never stood for anyone before you and I will not stand for anyone after you.'" (Muslim)

10. He ﷺ is a good example for every person who hopes to meet Allah ﷻ, to enter His Paradise and escape His Hellfire. Allah ﷻ said:

There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah often. (33:21)

11. He ﷺ did not speak anything out of his own desire. In fact, everything he said about the religion and its legislation is considered to be of the inspiration which contains no falsehood. As Allah ﷻ stated:

He does not speak from [his own] inclination. It is not but a revelation revealed. (53:3-4)

Twelfth Encounter

His Birth, Early Childhood and Allah's Care for Him

The Prophet ﷺ was born on Monday in the month of *Rabee` al-Awwal*. It was said to have been on the second, on the eighth, on the tenth or on the twelfth. *Ibn Katheer* said, "What is correct is that he was born in the "year of the elephant", which was stated by *Ibraheem ibn al-Mundhir*, the *shaykh* of al-Bukhari, by *Khalifah ibn Khayyat* and agreed on by others.

The scholars of biography have said, "When *Aminah* became pregnant with him she said, "I did not find him heavy, and when he emerged a light emerged with him that lit up everything between the east and the west."

Ibn `Asakir* and Abu *Na`eem related from *Ibn Abbas* ﷺ: When the Prophet ﷺ was born, `Abdul-*Muttalib* made the *`aqeeqah* for him with a ram and named him Muhammad (i.e., Praised). People said to him, "*O Abul-Harith*, what made you name him Muhammad, and not a name of his forefathers?" He replied, "I wanted that Allah should praise him in the heaven and that people should praise him on the earth."

His Father's Death

His father died while he ﷺ was yet in his mother's womb. It has also been said that it was some months after his birth, but the first statement is more widely accepted.

He ﷺ was breastfed a few days by *Thuwaybah,* a freed slave of *Abu Lahab*, who had freed her out of joy at the birth of this boy. Then a wet nurse was sought for him among *Bani Sa`d*, so *Halimah as-Sa`diyyah* breastfed him. He stayed with her among *Bani Sa`d* for about five years. There, his chest was opened and the angels removed his heart, washed it and extracted from it the share of the ego and of Satan. Allah ﷻ then filled it with light, wisdom, kindness and mercy and they returned it to its place. *Halimah* feared for him after that occurrence so she returned him to his mother, telling her what had happened, but it did not alarm her.

As-Suhayli commented, "This purification occurred twice:

first, during his childhood to purify his heart from the prompting of Satan

and second, when Allah ﷻ willed to raise him up to the divine presence to pray with the angels of the heavens, so he was purified internally and externally and his heart was filled with wisdom and faith.

His Mother's Death

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ reached the age of six, his mother, accompanied by *Umm Ayman*, took him to Madinah on a visit to his maternal uncles of *Bani Udayy ibn an-Najjar*. She stayed with them for a month but then died at *al-Abwaa'* while returning to *Makkah*.

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ passed through *al-Abwaa'* on his way to *Makkah* in the year of the conquest, he ﷺ

asked permission of his Lord to visit his mother's grave and it was granted. He ﷺ wept and those with him wept. Then he ﷺ said, *"Visit the graves, for they remind (you) of death."* (Muslim)

After his mother died, *Umm Ayman* took care of him. She was his slave that he ﷺ had inherited from his father. His grandfather, *`Abdul-Muttalib*, became his guardian, but when he ﷺ was eight years old his grandfather died. He had instructed that his uncle, *Abu Talib*, take custody of him, so he became his guardian and gave him the best of care. When Allah ﷻ appointed him as a prophet *Abu Talib* aided and supported him completely, even though he remained a polytheist until his death. Because of his support Allah ﷻ has lightened his punishment, as was mentioned in a hadith.

Allah's Protection of Him from the Contamination of Pre-Islamic Practices

Allah ﷻ protected His Prophet ﷺ from childhood and purified him of the evil customs of the days of ignorance before the advent of Islam. He ﷺ made idols detestable to him so that he never worshipped an idol or revered a statue. He ﷺ never drank intoxicants or joined the youths of *Quraysh* in their immoralities. On the contrary, he ﷺ was far removed from everything shameful and had noble morals and actions. He ﷺ was known among his people only as "the Trustworthy" due to what they observed of his pure character and truthful speech. They used to accept his judgement and comply with his opinion as is evident from the account of how he ﷺ set the Black Stone in its place. They accepted his plan when he requested a cloak, put the

Stone in the middle of it and told each tribal chief to lift it up while holding a corner of the cloth. Then he ﷺ pushed the Stone into place himself, so the people became calm and the impending war between the tribes was averted.

Thirteenth Encounter

His Marriage

The Prophet ﷺ married *Khadijah* when he was twenty-five years of age and she was forty. It was after he ﷺ had travelled to Syria on a business trip for her with her servant, *Maysarah*, who was much impressed by him and his integrity. Upon their return, he informed her of what he had observed. She sent a proposal of marriage to him and he married her.

Khadijah died three years before the Prophet's ﷺ *Hijrah* (emigration from *Makkah*). He ﷺ had been with her for twenty-five years, and she was his only wife until she died at the age of sixty-five. The Prophet ﷺ was about fifty at that time. After that he ﷺ married a number of women for various noble causes and aims. This refutes what is claimed by some *orientalists* and opponents that the Prophet ﷺ was driven by lust and was seeking pleasure. How could this be when he ﷺ had remained with one wife, fifteen years his senior, without marrying another until her death and after the age of youthful desires had passed? Was his sexuality latent all those years and then suddenly appeared when he reached the age of fifty? This is something no intelligent person will accept.

Many western scholars and intellectuals have themselves found this claim to be ridiculous. The Italian researcher, Dr. Laura Vaghlieri said, "During his years of youth when sexual desire is greatest and in spite of having lived in a society such as that of the Arabs before Islam,

where marriage as a social institution was almost non-existent and where plural wives was the rule and divorce extremely easy, Muhammad ﷺ did not marry but one wife. She was *Khadijah*, who was much older than himself. He remained her loyal, loving husband for twenty-five years and never married a second time or more than one except after *Khadijah* died and after he ﷺ had reached the age of fifty years."

All of his ﷺ subsequent marriages had a social or political motivation. They were based on the intent to honour women who were known to be righteous or to establish ties of kinship with some other tribes in order to facilitate the spread of Islam. With the exception of *`A'ishah,* Muhammad ﷺ did not marry any virgin or young woman. Can this be seen as lust?

Given that he was a man and not a god, it is also possible that he married out of desire for a son, as those he had from *Khadijah* had died.

Without much source of income, he ﷺ took on the responsibilities and burdens of a large family. But he ﷺ always observed perfectly equal treatment for all his wives, never once claiming the right to separate from any of them.

His conduct was in accordance with the tradition of the former prophets, Moses عليه السلام and others, whom people have never criticized for plural marriages. Could this be because we do not know the details of their personal lives

while we do know everything about the family life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ ?[23]

His Wives

After the death of *Khadijah* the Prophet ﷺ married *Sawdah bint Zam`ah*, then *`A'ishah bint Abi Bakr as-Siddiq*, and she was the only virgin he ﷺ married. Then he ﷺ married *Hafsah bint `Umar ibn al-Khattab* and then *Zaynab* bint *Khuzaymah ibn al-Harith*. And he ﷺ married *Umm Salamah,* whose name was *Hind bint Abi Umayyah*, and *Zaynab bint Jahsh* and *Juwairiah bint al-Harith* and *Umm Habibah*, whose name was *Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan*. And after the conquest of *Khaybar* he married *Safiyyah* bint *Huyayy* and then *Maymunah bint al-Harith* ﵂, and she was the last woman he married.

[23] From the book They Say About Islam by Dr. *Imad ad-Deen Khalil*, pp. 120-121.

Fourteenth Encounter

The Prophet and Women – 1

Enemies of Islam never tire of repeating the claim that Islam is unjust to women, oppresses them, deprives them of their rights and considers them no more than servants and a means of enjoyment for men.

But this is a falsehood refuted by what has been authentically narrated about the Prophet ﷺ regarding the honour he ﷺ accorded women and his concern for their condition. He ﷺ used to consult women, deal with them gently, support them in all situations and give them their complete rights in a way never dreamt of before.

Before Islam, the Arabs disliked having daughters and considered them a source of shame. Some of them were even known to have buried their female children alive. The *Qur'an* describes it as follows:

And when one of them is informed of [the birth of] a female, his face becomes dark, and he suppresses grief. He hides himself from the people because of the ill of which he has been informed. Should he keep it in humiliation or bury it in the ground? Unquestionably, evil is what they decide. (16:58-59)

And in the pre-Islamic days of ignorance when a woman's husband died, his sons and relatives inherited her as property; if they wished they would marry her to one of them and if they wished they could prevent her from remarrying and keep her thus until death. Islam did away with all that through its just rulings which guarantee the rights of women as well as those of men.

The Prophet ﷺ declared that women are equal to men in all aspects of humanity, saying,

"Women are but sisters of men." (Ahmad, Abu *Dawud* and at-*Tirmidhi*) So in Islam there is no conflict between the two sexes as its opponents imagine; rather, a brotherly relationship of mutual cooperation exists between them.

The noble *Qur'an* has confirmed the equality of men and women in the realms of faith, action and compensation in the Hereafter, for as Allah ﷻ stated:

Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so – for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward. (33:35)

And He said:

Whoever does an evil deed will not be recompensed except by the like thereof; but whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer – those will enter Paradise, being given provision therein without account. (40:40)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ mentioned his love for women, saying, *"Beloved to me from your world are women and pleasant scent, and my greatest pleasure is in prayer."* (Ahmad and *an-Nasa'i* – graded as *saheeh* by *al-Albani*) So if the Prophet ﷺ loved women, how could he ﷺ belittle or oppress them?

And while the Prophet ﷺ abolished the customary hatred of daughters and the terrible practice of burying them alive, he ﷺ encouraged raising them well and treating them kindly. He ﷺ said,

"Whoever cares for two girls until they reach puberty will come with me thus on the Day of Resurrection," and he brought together his two fingers. (Muslim) This shows that one attains high position and nearness to the Prophet ﷺ owing to his care and protection of his daughters until they reach the age of puberty and responsibility. He ﷺ also said,

"Whoever has three daughters or three sisters or two daughters or two sisters and lives with them in kindness, fearing Allah in regard to them, will enter Paradise." (*At-Tirmidhi* – graded as *saheeh* by *al-Albani*)

And the Prophet ﷺ was concerned with educating women. He ﷺ even appointed a day for them to assemble and would come to teach them from that which Allah ﷻ had taught him. (Muslim)

He ﷺ did not make woman a prisoner within the house, as they claim, but allowed her to go out to take care of her needs, visit her relatives and visit the sick. He ﷺ allowed her to buy and sell in the marketplace as long as she adhered to modest conduct and proper dress. He ﷺ also allowed her to attend the mosque and forbade preventing her, saying,

"Do not prevent your women from [coming to] the mosques." (Ahmad and Abu *Dawud*)

`And he ﷺ urged kindness toward her with the words,

"Be advised to be good to women." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) This involves good treatment, respect for her rights, concern for her feelings and avoidance of any kind of harm.

Fifteenth Encounter

The Prophet and Women – 2

The Prophet ﷺ encouraged husbands to spend on their wives. He ﷺ said,

"You will not spend any expenditure seeking the approval of Allah but that you will be rewarded for it – even the bite of food you put into the mouth of your wife." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And he ﷺ pointed out that what is spent on the family is the best expenditure, saying,

"The best dinar is the one a man spends on his dependants." (Muslim)

He ﷺ also said,

"When a man gives his wife a drink of water he is rewarded." (Ahmad – graded by al-Albani as hasan) When *`Irbaadh ibn Sariah* heard this hadith he hastened to bring some water to his wife to drink, telling her what he had heard from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

This is how the Prophet ﷺ taught his companions good treatment of women, affection and sympathy towards them, providing them with all kinds of benefit and spending on them appropriately.

The Prophet ﷺ made clear that good treatment of women is a sign of the nobility of a man's soul and generosity of his nature. He ﷺ stated,

"The best of you is the best of you to your wives." (Ahmad and at-*Tirmidhi*)

And he ﷺ forbade hatred of one's wife, saying,

"Let not a male believer hate a female believer; if he dislikes one trait of hers he will be pleased with another one." (Muslim)

Thus, the Prophet ﷺ ordered men to look for the positive aspects and praiseworthy actions in women and overlook the errors and negative aspects, because looking for bad behaviour and dwelling upon it leads to aversion and dislike between the spouses.

He ﷺ prohibited beating women, saying, "*Do not strike the female servants of Allah.*" (*Abu Dawud*) And he ﷺ threatened those who harm them with the words:

"O Allah, indeed, I make binding the right of the two vulnerable ones: the orphan and the woman." (Ahmad and *Ibn Majah*)

It meant that he would not make lawful the harming of either of them, and whoever does so has exposed himself to difficulty and punishment in this world and the next.

He ﷺ also prohibited husbands from exposing the secrets (private aspects) of their wives, as he prohibited wives from exposing the secrets of their husbands. He said, *"The worst of people in position before Allah on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who has intercourse with his wife and then spreads her secret."*[24] *(Muslim)*

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[24] i.e., describes it to others.

The Prophet ﷺ also honoured women by prohibiting husbands from assuming evil about their wives or suspicion of them. *Jabir* ﷺ reported:

"*The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prohibited men from surprising their wives by night, suspecting betrayal or seeking to catch their faults.*" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

As for the conduct of Allah's Messenger ﷺ with his own wives, it was of the utmost sensitivity and kindness. Al-*Aswad* reported: "I asked *`A'ishah* how the Prophet ﷺ was with his wives. She said, 'He ﷺ was in the occupation of his wife,' meaning that he ﷺ assisted her in her work. 'But when it was time for the prayer he ﷺ would get up for prayer. (Al-Bukhari)

He ﷺ would try to please his wives and amuse them with pleasant conversation and sweet words. An example is when he ﷺ said to *`A'ishah, "I know your anger and your contentment."*

She said, "How do you know that, O Messenger of Allah?" He ﷺ said,

"When you are content you say, 'Yes, by the Lord of Muhammad.' But when you are angry you say, 'No, by the Lord of Abraham.'"

She said, "Yes, by Allah, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ; I do not abandon except your name." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) She meant that her love of him was firm in her heart and did not change.

The Prophet ﷺ never forgot his wife, *Khadijah* after her death. *Anas* ﷺ reported: "When the Prophet ﷺ got a gift

he ﷺ would say, *'Take it to so-and-so, for she was a friend of Khadijah.* (At-Tabarani)

This is how our Prophet ﷺ honoured women, so how do those who call for the "liberation of women" compare to it?

Sixteenth Encounter

His Prophethood and Invitation to His People

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was appointed to prophethood at the age of forty, which is the age of complete maturity. The angel appeared to him in the cave of *Hiraa'* on Monday, the 17th of Ramadhan. When revelation descended on him, it was very difficult for him; his face changed and his forehead perspired.

When the angel, *Jibreel* عليه السلام, first came to him, he told him, "Recite." He ﷺ replied, *"I am not one who can recite."* The angel then pressed him hard and said, "Recite."
He ﷺ said, *"I am not one who can recite."* This took place three times until he said,

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created - created man from a clinging clot. Recite, and your Lord is most generous, who taught by the pen - taught man that which he knew not." (96:1-5)

The Messenger ﷺ returned to *Khadijah*, trembling, and told her what he ﷺ had seen. She reassured him, saying, "Glad tidings, for by Allah, Allah will never humiliate you. You keep ties of relationship, speak the truth, bear the burden of the weak, help the needy, provide for the guest and assist those afflicted by calamity."

Then she took him to her cousin, *Waraqah ibn Nawfal.* He had become a Christian in the pre-Islamic period and used to write scripture in Hebrew. He had written part of the Gospel in Arabic – as much as Allah ﷻ willed him to

write, and was an old man who had become blind. *Khadijah* said to him, "O my cousin, listen to your nephew." *Waraqah* asked, "O nephew, what have you seen?" So the Prophet ﷺ informed him of what he ﷺ had seen. *Waraqah* said, "That is the angel Allah ﷻ sent to Moses. If only I was younger and could be alive when your people drive you out." He asked, *"Will they drive me out?"* "Yes", replied *Waraqah,* "For no man has ever come with anything like what you have brought but that he was harmed. If I should live to see that day, I will support you vigorously." But he died shortly thereafter.

After that there was a pause in the revelation. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ remained as long as Allah ﷻ willed without experiencing anything, and he ﷺ became depressed and longed for it to descend once again.

Then the angel appeared to him seated on a chair between the heaven and the earth. He encouraged him and assured him that he ﷺ was truly the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. But he ﷺ was frightened, and upon returning to *Khadijah,* said, *"Wrap me up."* Then Allah ﷻ revealed:

O you who covers himself, arise and warn. And your Lord glorify, and your clothing purify, and contamination avoid. (74:1-5)

Allah ﷻ ordered him in these verses to warn his people, invite them to Allah ﷻ and to purify himself from misdeeds.

The Prophet ﷺ prepared himself to carry this great responsibility, for he ﷺ now knew that he ﷺ was really the Messenger of Allah. He ﷺ obeyed his Lord to the utmost degree inviting everyone to Allah ﷻ – the young and old, the free man and the slave, the male and the female, the

black and the white. From every tribe some people responded, those whom Allah ﷻ had willed to be successful in this life and the Hereafter. They entered Islam based on enlightenment and vision, but the weak-minded of *Makkah* began to abuse and harm them. Allah ﷻ protected the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through his uncle, *Abu Talib*, who was honoured and obeyed among the *Quraysh*. They dared not upset him by harming the Prophet ﷺ since they knew of his love for him. Besides, he adhered to their religion, which made them tolerant of him and not openly hostile.

Ibn al-Jawzi wrote: The Prophet ﷺ continued for three years concealing his *da`wah*; then Allah ﷻ revealed to him*:*
Declare what you are commanded (15:94)

so, he ﷺ announced it openly. After Allah ﷻ revealed:
And warn your closest kindred (26:214)

the Messenger of Allah ﷺ went out, ascended the hill of *Safa* and shouted to get their attention. The people asked, "Who is that shouting?" They were told it was Muhammad. They assembled before him and he ﷺ said,

"If I was to inform you that horsemen were in the valley behind this hill ready to attack you, would you believe me?"

They said, "Yes, for we have never known you to lie". He ﷺ said, *"Indeed, I am a Warner to you of a severe punishment."*

But his uncle, *Abu Lahab*, replied, "May you be ruined for the rest of the day. Is this what you gathered us for?" and got up. Thereupon Allah ﷻ revealed:

May the hands of Abu Lahab be ruined, and ruined is he (111:1) - to the end of the *Surah*. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Seventeenth Encounter

His Patience in the Face of Abuse

The Prophet ﷺ had become involved in *da`wah* and embarked on the path of advice and instruction. He ﷺ invited the people to worship Allahﷻ alone, associating no partner with Him. And he ﷺ called upon them to abandon the pagan customs of their forefathers: polytheism, idol worship and all immoral and unlawful practices. Only a few believed in him; the majority did not.

Although Allahﷻ had safeguarded and protected his life by means of his uncle, *Abu Talib*, the Prophet ﷺ was abused, restricted and persecuted severely. In the seventh year of prophethood, Allah's Messenger ﷺ, *Abu Talib* and the clans of *Bani Hashim* and *Bani Muttalib* took refuge in a small piece of land belonging to *Abu Talib*. The *Quraysh* decided to forcibly confine them to it, both the Muslims and non-Muslims who had supported their kinsmen, except for Abu Lahab. They agreed to enforce a boycott of the Prophet's ﷺ extended family, to not accept from them any terms of settlement, to stop them from entering the marketplaces and to prevent any provisions from reaching them until they handed over the Messenger of Allahﷺ to them for execution. They put this injustice in writing and hung the parchment inside the *Ka`bah*. The Prophet ﷺ then told his companions to emigrate to Abyssinia in view of the increased oppression. This was the second emigration – eighty-three men and eighteen women migrated - and some Muslims from Yemen joined them.

The Prophet ﷺ and those with him remained in exile for nearly three years in a state of extreme hardship and hunger, managing on the little that was slipped through secretly, until they were finally reduced to eating the leaves of trees. This continued until the tenth year of prophethood, when some men of the *Quraysh* put an end to the boycott and they were able to get out.

That same year the Prophet's ﷺ wife, *Khadijah*, passed away, and after two months, his uncle, *Abu Talib*. With his uncle's death, the *Quraysh* were free to persecute him more than ever, and increased their hostility and abuse of him.[25]

In the authentic collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim, it is related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was once praying near the *Ka`bah* while *Abu Jahl* was sitting with some of his friends nearby. The previous day they had slaughtered a she-camel, so *Abu Jahl* said, "Which of you will take its dead foetus and put it on Muhammad's ﷺ back while he ﷺ is prostrating?" So the most wicked of them went and brought it, and when the Prophet ﷺ prostrated he placed it between his shoulders and they laughed until they fell over one another. His daughter, *Fatimah*, came and threw it off him and began to curse them. When the Prophet ﷺ had completed his prayer he ﷺ raised his voice supplicating against them, saying, *"O Allah, deal with Quraysh"* three times. When they heard this they stopped laughing, fearing his supplication. He ﷺ continued,

[25] Lubaabul-Khiyaar fee Seeratil-Mukhtaar, pp.37-40.

"O Allah, deal with Abu Jahl ibn Hisham, `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah, Shaybah ibn Rabi`ah, al-Waleed ibn `Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf and `Uqbah ibn Abi Mu`eet." Ibn Mas`ud said, "By the One who sent Muhammad with the truth, I saw those whom he named fallen dead on the day of *Badr*; they were dragged and thrown into the well of *Badr*."

And *al-Bukhari* narrated that one day *`Uqbah ibn Abi Mu`eet* grabbed the Prophet ﷺ by his shoulders and wound his clothing around his neck, choking him severely. *Abu Bakr* came running and pushed him back, shouting,

"Would you kill a man for saying, 'My Lord is Allah?'"[26]

When persecution of Allah's Messenger ﷺ worsened he ﷺ set out for *Taif* to invite the tribes of *Thaqeef* to Islam, but only met from them obstinacy, ridicule and abuse; they threw stones at him until his heels bled. So he ﷺ decided to return to *Makkah*, and on his way, at *Qarn ath-Tha`alib*, he ﷺ looked up and found a cloud had shaded him. Within it was *Jibreel*, who called to him, "Indeed, Allah has heard what your people have said to you and how they respond to you and He has sent you the angel of the mountains so you may order him to do whatever you wish concerning them. The angel of the mountains addressed him, saying, "O Muhammad, indeed, Allah has heard what your people have said to you and how they respond to you. I am the angel of the mountains and Allah has sent me to you to order me to do whatever you wish. If you wish, I will crush them

[26] He was quoting from the *Qur'an* - 40:28.

between the two mountains [*of Makkah*]." But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ replied,

"Rather, I hope that Allah will bring forth from their loins those who will worship Allah alone without any partner and not associate anything with Him." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Eighteenth Encounter

Allah's Protection of His Prophet

Allah ﷻ told His Prophet ﷺ:

O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message. And Allah will protect you from the people. (5:67)

Ibn Katheer commented, "It means: 'Convey My message and I will protect you, support you and aid you against your enemies. I will give you victory over them, so do not fear and do not grieve. None of them will be able to harm you.' Before the revelation of this verse the Prophet ﷺ used to be guarded [by men]."

Abu *Hurayrah* ﷺ reported that *Abu Jahl* said, "Will Muhammad's ﷺ face be made dusty by any among you?" Someone said, "Yes." He said, "By *al-Laat* and *al-`Uzza*,[27] if I see him [prostrating], I will step on his neck and rub his face in the dust." But when the Prophet ﷺ came to pray, and he approached to do as he had said, they only saw him retreating and shielding himself with his hands. They asked him "What happened to you?" He said, "Between me and him was a pit of fire, something terrible and wings!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"If he had come closer to me the angels would have plucked off his limbs one by one."* (Muslim)

[27] Two of their most revered goddesses.

And *Ibn `Abbas* ﷺ reported that *Abu Jahl* had said, "If I see Muhammad ﷺ praying at the *Ka`bah*, I will step on his neck." When the Prophet ﷺ heard about it he ﷺ said,

"If he had done so the angels would have seized him." (Al-Bukhari)

Jabir ibn `Abdullah ﷺ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was at war when an opening was seen in Muslim ranks. A man called *Ghawrath ibn al-Harith* approached until he stood over the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "Who can save you from me?" The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Allah."* The sword fell from his hand and the Prophet ﷺ took hold of it and said, *"Who can save you from me?"* He said, "be the best taker [of ransom]." The Prophet ﷺ said,

"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that I am the Messenger of Allah." He replied, "No, but I promise you I will not fight you, nor will I be allied with any people who fights you." So he let him go, and upon his return he said, "I have come back to you from the best of people." (Al-Hakim, who graded it as *saheeh*)

Anas ﷺ reported that there was a Christian man who entered Islam and used to recite *Surahs Al-Baqarah* and *Aali `Imraan* and write for the Prophet ﷺ. Then he reverted to Christianity and said, "Muhammad does not know except what I write for him." So Allahﷻ caused him to die and they buried him. But by morning the earth had cast him out. They said, "This was done by Muhammad and his companions; because he left them they dug him up and pulled him out." Then they dug him another grave, making it deeper, but by morning the earth had cast him out. They

said, "This was done by Muhammad ﷺ and his companions; because he left them they dug him up and pulled him out." Then they dug him another grave, making it as deep as they could. But by morning the earth had cast him out. They then knew that it had not been done by human beings, so they left him. (Al-Bukhari)

In addition, Allah ﷻ protected His Prophet ﷺ when He ﷻ saved him from an assassination attempt that the *Quraysh* were plotting at night. They had agreed that a strong young man be chosen from each tribe, each with a sharp sword, and that they would strike the Messenger all ﷺ together. Thus, his blood would be on the hands of all the tribes and his clan would not be able to fight all of the Arabs. But *Jibreel* ؑ came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and informed him of the plan of the polytheists, told him not to sleep in his bed that night, and that Allah ﷻ had given him permission to emigrate.

And Allah ﷻ protected His Prophet ﷺ from *Suraqah ibn Malik* ؓ while on his *Hijrah* journey. And He protected him in the cave, when *Abu Bakr* ؓ said to him, "O Messenger of Allah, if one of them should look down toward his feet he would see us." But he ﷺ replied,

"Abu Bakr ؓ*, what do you think about two of whom Allah is the third?"* (Al-Bukhari)

Ibn Katheer said, " Allah ﷻ protected His Messenger ﷺ from the people of *Makkah*: the influential and affluent who envied him and arrogantly opposed him with the greatest animosity and hatred, were at war with him day and night.

He was protected by means that Allah ﷻ created out of His great power and wisdom. He protected him at the beginning of his mission through his uncle, *Abu Talib*, who was a prominent and influential leader among the *Quraysh* and in whose heart Allah ﷻ created a natural love for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. If he had accepted Islam the disbelievers would have become emboldened against him, but because he remained one of them, they esteemed and respected him.

After the death of *Abu Talib*, the Prophet ﷺ suffered abuse briefly, but then Allah ﷻ sent him the *Ansar*, who embraced Islam, pledged allegiance and invited him to their homeland, which was Madinah. And when he ﷺ arrived there, they protected him against every enemy. Whenever any of the polytheists, Jews or Christians intended to harm him, Allah ﷻ planned on his behalf and thwarted their plots.

Nineteenth Encounter

Love of the Prophet

Among the essentials of faith is love for the leader of humanity, Muhammad ﷺ. How can a Muslim not love his Prophet ﷺ, when he is the means of his guidance to the path of enlightenment and belief and his salvation from disbelief and hellfire.

The Prophet ﷺ said,

"None of you [truly] believes until I am more beloved to him than his child, his parent and all people." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In fact, one's love for the Prophet ﷺ should be greater than his love for himself. `Umar *ibn al-Khattab* ﷺ had said to him, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, you are more beloved to me than everything except myself." The Prophet ﷺ replied,

"No, by the one in whose hand is my soul – not until I am more beloved to you than yourself."

Then `*Umar* ﷺ said, "Now, by Allah, you are more beloved to me than myself." So the Prophet ﷺ said, *"Now, O `Umar."* (Al-Bukhari) He meant: Now you know and have spoken as you should.

Many disobedient Muslims claim to love the Prophet ﷺ. However, the issue is not one of professed love, but of actual love. For among the requirements of love for the Prophet ﷺ is obedience to his orders, avoidance of what he prohibited and to worship Allah ﷻ only as he prescribed and not according to innovations and whims. That is why

the Prophet ﷺ said, *"All of my Ummah will enter Paradise except those who refuse."*

His companions asked, "And who would refuse, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ?" He ﷺ said, *"Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise and whoever disobeys me has refused."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Love for the Prophet ﷺ is not expressed by holding celebrations, ceremonies or chanting poetry containing unlawful exaggeration. Rather, it is by acting according to his *Sunnah*, observing his legislation and advocating his guidance. It also includes the defence of his *Sunnah*, belief in what he ﷺ said, reverence for him, invoking blessings upon him when he is mentioned and avoiding innovations in his religion. And it includes love for his companions, defence of them, acknowledgement of their virtues, hatred of those who oppose his *Sunnah* or legislation and of those who belittle its scholars and narrators. Anyone who acts contrary to this is as distant from love of the Prophet ﷺ as the degree he is from his teachings.

For example, the Prophet ﷺ has said, *"He who innovates something in this matter of ours that is not a part of it - it will be rejected."*[28] (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And he ﷺ said, *"Beware of newly devised matters, for every newly devised thing is an innovation, and every innovation is misguidance."* (Abu *Dawud and at-Tirmidhi*)

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[28] i.e., it will not be accepted by Allah ﷻ.

In spite of these warnings against innovation, some people add things to the religion of Allah ﷻ which are not a part of it, thinking they are doing something good or even claiming that these things are expressions of love for the Prophet ﷺ. They might attribute falsehood to him by forging a hadith and will say that it is not against him but in his favour. This is one of the worst kinds of falsehood and misguidance because the religion of Allah ﷻ is complete and is not in need of their false embellishments.

Another example of this is that the Prophet ﷺ prohibited insulting his companions and said,

"Do not revile my companions, for if one of you should spend [in charity] as much as Mount Uhud in gold it would not equal one measure [of 2/3 kg.] from one of them, or even half a measure." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And in spite of this, some people disparage the companions of Allah's Messenger, curse *Abu Bakr* ﷺ and *`Umar* ﷺ and accuse *`A'ishah*, Mother of the Believers, of what Allah ﷻ has declared her innocent of[29] in His Book. And they claim it is out of love for the Prophet ﷺ and in defence of his household.

And yet another is that the Prophet ﷺ prohibited exaggerated praise of him, saying,

"Do not praise me exceedingly as the Christians praised the son of Mary. I am only His servant, so say, 'the Servant of Allah and His Messenger.'" (al-Bukhari) But in spite of this, some people

[29] i.e., immorality.

follow the manner of the Christians by describing the Prophet ﷺ in ways that are only befitting to Allah سبحانه وتعالى, and supplicate to him for provision, for cure from illness, for relief from afflictions and so on, and these are things that may only be sought from Allah سبحانه وتعالى. Then they claim it is out of love for the Prophet ﷺ, while in reality it is a sign of ignorance, a form of polytheism and is in contradiction of Allah سبحانه وتعالى and His Messenger ﷺ.

Twentieth Encounter

The Greatest Sign of Prophethood

Among the greatest signs of Muhammad's ﷺ prophethood is the noble *Qur'an*. In it Allah ﷻ challenges the Arabs and others, until the Day of Resurrection, to produce something like it. He ﷻ said:

And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses [i.e., supporters] other than Allah, if you should be truthful. (2:23) And: *Or do they say, "He invented it?" Say, "Then bring forth a surah like it and call upon whomever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful." (10:38)*

Ibn al-Jawzi stated that the *Qur'an* is inimitable in several ways:

1st in its eloquence and precision, its conciseness and comprehensiveness. A story might be related at length and then repeated in condensed form without losing any of its substance.

2nd In its dissimilarity to the styles of prose and poetry which were used by the Arabs. They failed in efforts to imitate it and acknowledged its superiority. *Al-Waleed ibn al-Mugheerah*[30] admitted, "By Allah, indeed, it has a sweetness and indeed, it has a gracefulness."

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[30] An enemy of Islam.

3rd In its information about previous nations and the prophets who are known to the Jews and Christians, although the one who conveyed it was illiterate and did not read or write, nor had he met with scholars or soothsayers. In fact, those Arabs who could read and write and did meet with scholars did not know the information contained in the *Qur'an*.

4th In its information about unknown events of the future, which is clear-cut evidence, since what it stated proved to be true. To illustrate: The Jews were told:

If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not [other] people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful. (2:94) Then Allah ﷻ said:

But never will they wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. (2:95)

And He ﷻ said to the people: *Then produce a surah the like thereof.* (2:23) Then He said: *And you will never be able to.* (2:24) And Allah ﷻ said: *Say to those who disbelieve, "You will be overcome."* (3:12)

And they were overcome. He also said: *You will surely enter al-Masjid al-Haraam, if Allah wills, in safety.* (48:27)

And they entered it. And He said about Abu Lahab: *He will enter a Fire of [blazing] flame, and his wife [as well] – the carrier of firewood.*[31] *Around her neck is a rope of [twisted] fibre.* (111:3-5)

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31 The word "firewood" was used by the Arabs to allude to slander and backbiting.

This was a statement that they would both die in a state of unbelief, and that is what happened.

5th In its freedom from inconsistency and contradiction. Allah ﷻ said: *If [the Qur'an] had been from other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction. (4:82)* And He said*: Indeed, it is We who sent down the message,*[32] *and indeed, We will be its guardian. (15:9)*

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported that the Prophet ﷺ said,

"There was no prophet among the [former] prophets but that he was given signs which the people believed in. And indeed, I was given a revelation that Allah revealed to me. So I hope to be the one, with the most followers on the Day of Resurrection." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Ibn `Aqeel said, "From the inimitability of the *Qur'an* is that no one can cite from it a verse whose meaning was taken from previous words, while humans continue to learn things from one another. As it is said, "*Al-Mutanabbi* took from *al-Bohtari*."

Ibn al-Jawzi said, "I have deduced two important meanings.

One: is that the miracles of former prophets ceased with their death. So if an atheist said today, 'What proof is there that Muhammad ﷺ and Moses ؑ were true prophets?' and he was told, 'The moon was split for Muhammad ﷺ and the sea was split for Moses ؑ,' he would say, 'That is impossible.' So, Allah ﷻ made this *Qur'an* a miracle for

[32] i.e., *the Qur'an.*

Muhammad ﷺ remaining forever, which shows his truthfulness after his death as well as that of the former prophets, since he confirmed their message and gave information about them.

The second: is that the *Qur'an* told the Jews and Christians that the description of Muhammad ﷺ was written in the Torah and the Gospel. It also testified to the faith of *Hatib* ﷺ and the innocence of *`A'ishah,* which are testimonies about something unknown. If his description had not been found in the Torah and the Gospel these testimonies would have been objectionable to them, and if *`A'ishah* and *Hatib* ﷺ had known about themselves other than what was stated about them in the *Qur'an* they would have renounced the faith.[33]

[33] Condensed from *Al-Wafaa* pp.267-273.

Twenty-First Encounter

The Prophet's Worship

The Prophet ﷺ used to do much prayer, fasting, *dhikr*, supplication and other kinds of worship. And when he performed an act of worship he would continue with it and do it regularly. *`A'ishah* reported, "When he ﷺ missed his night prayers due to pain or something else he ﷺ would pray twelve *rak`ahs* the next day." (Muslim)

He ﷺ never abandoned night prayers and used to stand until his feet were swollen. When he was asked about it, he ﷺ said, *"Should I not be a grateful servant?"* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman ؓ said, "The other night I prayed with the Prophet ﷺ and he ﷺ began with *Surah* al-*Baqarah.* I thought that he would bow after a hundred verses but he continued, so I thought he would pray one *rak`ah* with it. But then he ﷺ began *Surah an-Nisaa'* and recited it, and then *Surah Aali `Imraan* and recited it; and he recited slowly. When he ﷺ came to a verse of praise he ﷺ would praise Allah ﷻ, and when he ﷺ came to a verse of supplication he ﷺ would supplicate, and when he ﷺ came to a verse mentioning punishment he ﷺ would seek refuge in Allah ﷻ. Then he ﷺ bowed in *ruku`*, saying, *'Subhana rabbi al-`adheem.'* His *ruku`* was about as long as his standing. Then he ﷺ said, *'Sami`-Allahu liman hamidah'* and stood for almost as long as his *ruku`*. Then, he ﷺ prostrated, saying,

'Subhana rabbi al-a`la.' His prostration was almost as long as he ﷺ had been standing." (Muslim)

He ﷺ always used to pray ten *rak`ahs* regularly when at home: two before *dhuhr* prayer and two after it, two after *maghrib*, two after *`ishaa'* and two before *fajr*. He adhered more strictly to the *sunnah* of *fajr* than any other voluntary prayer. He ﷺ never missed these two *rak`ahs* or the *witr* prayer, whether travelling or at home, and it was not reported that he performed any voluntary prayers during his travels except the *sunnah* of *fajr* and the *witr*. He ﷺ would sometimes perform four *rak`ahs* before the *dhuhr* prayer, and once he ﷺ prayed during the night reciting one verse of the *Qur'an*, which he ﷺ kept on repeating until the morning.

He ﷺ was keen to fast on Mondays and Thursdays and said, *"Deeds are shown [to Allah] on Mondays and Thursdays, and I like to have my deeds shown while I am fasting."* (*At-Tirmidhi - hasan*)

He ﷺ used to fast the first three days of every lunar month. *Mu`adhah al-`Adawiyyah* asked *`A'ishah*, "Did the Prophet ﷺ fast three days of every month?" She replied, "Yes." She asked, "In which part of the month did he ﷺ fast?" *`A'ishah* said, "It would not matter to him in which part of the month he ﷺ fasted." (Muslim)

Ibn `Abbas* ؓ reported: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would not fail to fast the days of the full moon (the 13th, 14th and 15th), whether at home or on a journey. (*An-Nasa'i – hasan)* And he ﷺ would fast *`Ashurad' (the tenth of Muharram) and encourage people to fast it.

And *`A'ishah* said, "He ﷺ never fasted in any other month more than he ﷺ did in *Sha`baan*; he ﷺ used to fast nearly all of it. In another narration she said, "He would fast *Sha`baan* except for a little." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

As for *dhikr,* the Prophet's ﷺ tongue never ceased mentioning Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. He ﷺ used to mention Allah ﷻ in every condition. When he ﷺ finished his prayer he would ask Allah's forgiveness three times and say, *"Allaahumma antas-salaamu wa minkas-salaamu, tabaarakta ya dhal-jalaali wal- ikraam.*"

(O Allah, You are peace and from You comes peace. Blessed are You, O Owner of Majesty and Honour.) (Muslim) And after ending the prayer and pronouncing the final salutation, he ﷺ would say,

"La ilaaha ill-Allaahu wahdahu la shareeka lahu, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu wa huwa `ala kulli shay'in qadeer. Allaahumma la maani`a lima a`tayta, wa la mu`tiya lima mana`ta, wa la yanfa`u dhal-jaddi minkal-jadd." (There is no god but Allah, alone, having no partner. His is sovereignty and to Him is all praise and He is over all things competent. O Allah, there is no preventer of what You grant and no granter of what You prevent, and no means will benefit a man of means against You.) (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

During his *ruku`* and *sujud* (prostration) he ﷺ would say, "*Subbuhun Quddusun Rabbul-malaa'ikati war-rooh."* (Exalted and Pure, Lord of the angels and the spirit.[34]) (Muslim)

[34] "The spirit" refers to the angel *Jibreel.*

Anas ؓ reported that the most frequent supplication of the Prophet ﷺ was, *"Rabbana aatina fid-dunya hasanatan wa fil-aakhirati hasantan wa qina `adhaaban-naar.* (Our Lord, grant us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of the Fire) (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And he ﷺ would ask Allah's forgiveness often. *Ibn `Umar* ؓ reported: "We would count that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said a hundred times during one meeting,

"My Lord, forgive me and accept my repentance. Indeed, You are the Oft-forgiving, the Merciful." (Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi, who graded it as hasan-saheeh)

The Prophet ﷺ prohibited going to extremes in worship and warned against overexertion. He ﷺ said,

"Take on only what you can endure, for Allah does not lose interest until you do." And he ﷺ said that the best worship is that which is done consistently. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Twenty-Second Encounter

The Initial Spread of Islam

The Prophet ﷺ returned to *Makkah* after the people of *Taif* had met him with disdain and ridicule. He ﷺ entered it under the protection of *al-Mut`im ibn `Adiyy*.

In the midst of this tense atmosphere following denial, boycott and persecution, Allah ﷻ intended to support His Messenger ﷺ , so He ﷻ honoured him with the *Israa' and Mi`raaj*. He ﷻ showed him some of His greatest signs and proofs of His grandeur and ability in order to strengthen him for confrontation of the disbelievers.

The *Israa*' was his journey by night from *al-Masjid al-Haraam* to *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* in Jerusalem and his return in the same night.

The *Mi`raaj* was his ascent to the heavens where he ﷺ met with the prophets, saw worlds of the unseen and where the five daily prayers were made obligatory.

This event served to distinguish the true believers, as some of those who had entered Islam left it then, and some went to *Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq* ﷺ and said to him, "Your friend claims that he was taken at night to Jerusalem." *Abu Bakr* ﷺ said, "Did he ﷺ say that?" They said, "Yes." He ﷺ said, "If he ﷺ said that then he has spoken the truth." They said, "Do you believe that he went to Jerusalem and returned before morning?" He ﷺ said, "Yes. Indeed, I believe what is stranger than that; I believe him about the information that

comes down to him morning and evening." This is why *Abu Bakr* was called "*as-Sideeq*."[35]

Rejection of the Prophet ﷺ by the *Quraysh* and their obstruction of his mission made him ﷺ turn to other Arab tribes. After his return from *Taif* he ﷺ began to offer his message to the tribes during pilgrimage seasons; he ﷺ would explain Islam to them and seek their support in enabling him to convey the words of Allah ﷻ. Some of them responded maliciously and others positively. Among those whose response was most hostile was *Bani Hanifah*, the tribe of *Musaylimah* the Liar.[36]

And among those to whom he ﷺ offered his message was a group of Arabs of the Aus tribe from *Yathrib*.[37] When he spoke to them they recognized his description from what the Jews had described and said to one another, "By Allah, he is the prophet predicted by the Jews, and they must not come to him before we do." Six of them believed, and they were the means by which Islam spread in *Madinah*. Those six were: *As`ad ibn Zurarah*, *`Auf ibn al-Harith, Rafi` ibn Malik, Qutbah ibn `Aamir ibn Hadeedah, `Oqbah bin `Aamir and Sa`d ibn ar-Rabi`*. They left after promising to come back the following year.

The next year, in the twelfth year of prophethood, the First Pledge of *`Aqabah* took place. Twelve men, ten from Aus and two from *Khazraj* and among them five of the

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[35] Supporter of truth.
[36] Known as such for his false claim *to prophethood*.
[37] Later called "*Madinah*".

original six, pledged to the Prophet ﷺ their faith, and to abandon polytheism and sins, do good deeds and speak only the truth. Then they went back to *Madinah* and Allah ﷻ increased Islam therein until no home remained in which the Prophet ﷺ was not being mentioned.

In the following year, the thirteenth of prophethood, the Second Pledge of *`Aqabah* took place. A delegation of seventy men and two women came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and declared their acceptance of Islam. They pledged to obey him in times of vitality and laziness, to spend [for Allah's cause] in times of ease and hardship, to order what is right and forbid what is wrong, to stand up for the cause of Allahﷻ not fearing the blame of a critic and to support and defend the Prophet ﷺ.

Then he ﷺ asked them to appoint from among themselves twelve men to be leaders among their people, so they appointed nine from *Khazraj* and three from Aus. The Prophet ﷺ told them,

"You are my sponsors among your people as the disciples were for Jesus, son of Mary, and I am a sponsor for my people."

After that they left for *Madinah* and Islam spread among its inhabitants, may Allah be pleased with them. That was before the Prophet's ﷺ blessed *Hijrah*.

Twenty-Third Encounter

The Migration to Madinah

When persecution of the Prophet's ﷺ companions increased severely, he ﷺ gave them permission to emigrate from *Makkah* to *Madinah*. He ﷺ was now assured that his *da`wah* had spread there and that it had become a suitable place to receive the emigrants. The believers began to emigrate in groups, one after another.

The Prophet ﷺ remained behind, and *Abu Bakr* ﷺ and `Ali ﷺ remained with him. Some others who had been forcibly detained by the *Quraysh* remained as well. The *Quraysh* knew that the Muslims had gone to a safe place and feared the spread of the religion, so they met and agreed upon the assassination of Allah's Messenger ﷺ.

On the night in which they planned to kill him Allah ﷻ let His Prophet ﷺ know of what they were plotting. He ordered him to emigrate and join the believers and not to sleep in his bed that night. So the Prophet ﷺ told `Ali ﷺ to sleep in his bed and cover himself with his garment, and then [the next day] to return to the people whatever they had kept with him in trust. `Ali ﷺ did as he was told and slept in the Prophet's ﷺ bed while the swords were drawn outside the door.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then went out, walking past those who were waiting to kill him. He threw dust on their heads and Allahﷻ blinded their vision. Then he ﷺ went on to the house of his friend, *Abu Bakr* ﷺ and they hurriedly

left together during the same night. The Prophet ﷺ and *Abu Bakr* ؓ walked until they reached the cave of *Thawr* and remained inside the cave until the search for them had lessened.

The *Quraysh* were enraged upon learning that their plot had failed. They sent out men to search for the Prophet ﷺ in every direction, promising anyone who brought him back or brought information about him one hundred she-camels. The search led some of them to the mouth of the cave. They stood outside it, but Allah ﷻ turned them away and protected His Prophet ﷺ from their conspiracy. *Abu Bakr* ؓ had said to him, "O Messenger of Allah, if one of them should look down toward his feet he would see us." But he ﷺ replied,

" O *Abu Bakr, what do you think about two of whom Allah is the third?*" (Al-Bukhari)

After three nights, the guide they had hired arrived with two camels as previously planned. They then headed toward *Madinah.*

On the way they stopped at the tent of *Umm Ma`bad al-Khuza`iyyah.* She had a dehydrated goat that could give no milk. The Prophet ﷺ took her permission to milk it and due to his blessing its udder filled with milk. He ﷺ gave drink to her and to those with him and drank himself. Then he ﷺ milked it again, filled her container and left.

Suraqah ibn Malik ؓ heard that the Prophet ﷺ had taken the coastal route. He aspired to earn the reward offered by the *Quraysh* so he took his bow, mounted his

horse and set out in pursuit. As he approached, the Prophet ﷺ supplicated and his horse stumbled and fell. He realized that it was due to the Prophet's ﷺ supplication and that he was protected. He requested security and promised to mislead his pursuers. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ supplicated for him and his horse regained its strength. He returned to *Makkah* and began deceiving people regarding the direction the Prophet ﷺ had taken.

The *Ansar* would come out to the entrances of their city awaiting the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ and then return to their homes when the heat increased. On Monday, the 12th of Rabi` *al-Awwal* in the thirteenth year of prophethood, someone shouted that the Prophet ﷺ had been seen approaching. Cries of "*Allahu akbar*" could be heard everywhere, and the people ran out to receive the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

He ﷺ first stayed at *Quba*' and established a *masjid* there, the first *masjid* built in Islam. After a few days in *Quba*' the Prophet ﷺ went on to *Madinah*. While on his way the time came for the *Jumu`ah* (Friday) prayer, so he ﷺ led those Muslims who accompanied him in the prayer. It was their first *Jumu`ah* prayer.

After the prayer the Prophet ﷺ entered *Madinah* from the south. From that day it was called "*Madinat ar-Rasul*" (City of the Messenger ﷺ). There was joy and elation throughout the city at the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ. It had become a secure home from which Muslims could convey the message of Allah ﷻ to the world, east and west.

Twenty-Fourth Encounter

The Prophet's Lifestyle

The Prophet ﷺ knew the reality of this world, its brevity and its temporary nature. So he ﷺ lived in it not in affluence but as a poor person, enduring hunger one day with patience and eating one day with gratitude.

He ﷺ made clear to his *Ummah* the danger of worldly temptations and of becoming submerged in its desires and its pleasures. He ﷺ said,

"The world is beautiful and green and Allah has given you responsibility therein and observes what you do. So beware of the world and beware of women because the first temptation of the Children of Israel was from women." (Muslim)

And the Prophet ﷺ knew that this world is a paradise only for those who have no share in the eternal Paradise, and would say,

"O Allah, there is no life but the life of the Hereafter." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Hence, the Hereafter was his greatest concern, so he ﷺ would empty his heart of the concerns of this world. And although worldly things eventually came to him in abundance, he ﷺ disassociated himself from them, saying, *"What do I need of this world? It is like the shade of a tree in which a rider naps at noon; then he moves on and leaves it."* (At-Tirmidhi, who graded it as hasan-saheeh)

*`Amr ibn al-Harith*ﷺ, the brother of *Juwayriah*, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not leave at his death a single dinar or dirham, nor did he leave a male or female slave or anything at all except a white mule that he used to ride, his weapon and a piece of land that he had left as a charity to be used by travellers." (Al-Bukhari)

This is what the best of all creation ﷺ left behind. He ﷺ had refused to be a messenger who was a king and preferred to be a messenger who was a servant. *Abu Hurayrah*ﷺ reported that *Jibreel*ﷺ sat in front of the Prophet ﷺ, and he looked toward the sky and saw an angel descending. *Jibreel*ﷺ said to him, "This angel has not descended since he was created before now." When he descended he said, "O Muhammad ﷺ, your Lord has sent me to you. Shall I make you a king and messenger or a servant and messenger?" *Jibreel*ﷺ told him, "Be humble to your Lord, O Muhammad ﷺ." So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"No, rather a servant and messenger."* (Ibn Hibban – graded as saheeh by al-Albani)

Thus, the Prophet's ﷺ life was based on modesty and indifference to the world. *`A'ishah* reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ died in my house where there was no meat and nothing for him to eat but some barley on my shelf which I had eaten from for a long period. Then I ate it and it finished." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

`Umar ibn al-Khattab ﷺ spoke about what people had acquired in this world and then said, "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ bent over [with hunger], not finding even the worst quality of dates to fill his stomach." (Muslim)

Anas ﷺ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"I have been frightened in the cause of Allah as no one else has been, and have been harmed in the cause of Allah as no one else has been, and have spent thirty days and nights with Bilal when we had nothing to eat except what Bilal could hide under his armpit."* (At-Tirmidhi, who graded it as hasan-saheeh)

Ibn `Abbas ﷺ reported: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ would spend several consecutive nights with his family not finding anything for dinner, and most of their bread was of barley." (At-Tirmidhi, who graded it as hasan-saheeh)

And *Anas* ﷺ said, "The Prophet ﷺ never ate at a table until he died, and he ﷺ never ate thin loaves of bread until he ﷺ died."

He ﷺ used to sit on a straw mat and sleep on it. *`Umar ibn al-Khattab* ﷺ reported: "I came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he ﷺ was lying on a mat. He ﷺ was wearing a waistcloth and nothing else, so the mat had made marks on his side. And I noticed a handful of barley, about one measure, and some lentils in a corner of the room and a water skin hanging. My eyes filled with tears. He ﷺ said, *'What makes you weep, Ibn al-Khattab?'* I said, 'O Prophet of Allah ﷺ, how can I not weep when this mat has marked your side and I do not see on your shelf except what I see? Chosroes and Caesar live among fruit gardens and rivers while you are Allah's Prophet ﷺ and His chosen one, and this is your provision?!' He ﷺ said,

'O Ibn al-Khattab, are you not pleased that we have the Hereafter and they have the world?' " (Ibn Majah – graded as saheeh by al-Mundhiri)

Twenty-Fifth Encounter

The Establishment of a Nation

When the Prophet ﷺ entered Madinah, its people welcomed him with gladness and cordiality. There was no house he passed but that its owner would take hold of his camel's rope and urge him to stay with him. But he ﷺ apologized to each of them and said, *"Let her go, for she is commanded [by Allah]."* The she-camel kept on walking until it reached the place of his *masjid* where it sat down. Then it got up and went ahead a short way, but returned to the first spot and sat down again. The Prophet ﷺ dismounted on the land of his maternal uncles, *Bani an-Najjar*. He ﷺ asked, *"Which of our family's houses is nearest?"* *Abu Ayyub* said, "Mine, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ." So the Prophet ﷺ stayed with *Abu Ayyub al-Ansari* ﷺ.

The first thing the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did after arriving in *Madinah* was to built his *masjid* in the place where the she-camel had stopped. The land was owned by two orphan boys and he ﷺ purchased it from them. He ﷺ took part in the construction himself and then built his wives' apartments next to the *masjid*. When the apartments were completed he left the house of *Abu Ayyub* ﷺ and moved there. And he established the *adhaan* to assemble the people at prayer time.

The Prophet ﷺ established a bond of brotherhood between the *Muhajireen* (those who had emigrated from *Makkah*) and the *Ansar*. They were ninety men, half from the *Muhajireen* and half from the *Ansar*. The brotherhood

included mutual support and that they would inherit one another in place of their relatives. This lasted until the battle of *Badr*, when Allahﷻ revealed:

And the [blood] relatives are more entitled [to inheritance] in the decree of Allah. (33:6) So, inheritance was restored to Muslim relatives and was no longer for the adopted brother.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ made peace with the Jews of Madinah and drew up a written pact between them and himself. Their religious scholar, *`Abdullah ibn Salam*, entered Islam but most of them remained disbelievers.[38]

And he ﷺ coordinated relationships between the *Muhajireen, the Ansar* and the Jews. Some of the books of *seerah* (his biography) mentioned the conditions stated in the document, some of which are:

- The believers from among the *Muhajireen and the Ansar* are one community, excluding [other] people.
- Believers shall not leave anyone destitute among them, but give to him according to what is acceptable.
- The righteous believers shall stand against anyone among them who oppresses or seeks to spread injustice, sin, aggression or corruption among the believers. They shall all stand against him even if he should be the son of one of them.
- A believer shall not kill a believer in retribution for an unbeliever, nor shall he aid an unbeliever against a believer.

[38] *Zad al-Ma`ad*, 3/63, 65.

• The protection given in the name of Allah ﷻ is one [respected by all]. The most humble of Muslims may grant protection to someone on behalf of all. Believers are protectors of one another, to the exclusion of others.

• The Jews who follow us will have support and equality. They shall not be wronged nor their enemies aided.

• Peace efforts for the believers must be as one. No peace agreement shall be made by believers when others are fighting in the cause of Allah ﷻ except when all concur.

• Whenever you differ over anything it must be referred to Allah ﷻ and to Muhammad ﷺ.

• The Jews of *Bani `Auf* are one community with the believers. The Jews have their religion and the Muslims have theirs. And their freedmen and their persons are guaranteed except for one who wrongs himself and sins, for he only harms himself and the members of his household.

• The close friends of the Jews are as themselves. None of them shall go out to war except with permission of Muhammad ﷺ.

• One who is under protection shall be [as secure] as his protector, doing no harm and committing no sin.

• Safety and protection shall not be granted unless by consent of its people.

These are some clauses of the pact which established the foundations of mutual coexistence between the groups living in Madinah and defined the concept of the Islamic *Ummah,* which includes all Muslims, and the Islamic state, which was then the city of Madinah. It stipulated that the highest authority is Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, especially in cases of

disagreement and dispute. This document also guaranteed freedom of belief and worship as well as the right of every individual to security. And it confirmed the principle of equality and justice for all people.

Anyone who contemplates the clauses of this pact will find in them many of the refined principles for which the advocates of human rights are presently calling. The Prophet ﷺ was the first to outline these rights and systemize them according to Allah's legislation as stated in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. This just system of human rights is in clear contrast to what the international organizations claim to be rights, while in reality they are oppression, injustice, violation of human dignity and partiality toward certain groups at the expense of others.

Twenty-Sixth Encounter

The Prophet's Courage

The Prophet ﷺ was the most courageous of people. This is evidenced by the fact that he stood against the unbelievers by himself, calling for *tawheed* and sincere worship of Allah ﷻ alone. All the unbelievers opposed him and were united in waging war against him. They abused him severely and plotted to kill him several times but that did not terrify or dissuade him; rather, it increased his persistence in *da`wah* and adherence to the truth that had come to him. Challenging the tyrants of the earth he declared defiantly,

"By Allah, if they should place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left for me to abandon this matter, I will not abandon it until Allah makes it dominant or else I die in the effort."

Anas ibn Malik ؓ said, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the best of people, the most generous of people and the most courageous of people. The inhabitants of *Madinah* were frightened by a sound one night so some of them went out toward it, but they met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returning. He ﷺ had gone out before them to investigate the sound, riding an unsaddled horse belonging to *Abu Talhah* ؓ with a sword tied to its neck. He ﷺ told them, *"Fear not, fear not."* *An-Nawawi* commented, "One recognizes his courage by the extreme haste with which he went out to meet a possible enemy before everyone else; he had investigated the situation and was on his way back before they arrived there.

Jabir ؓ reported: "We were digging the trench [to defend the city] when we came upon a hard boulder. They went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'This boulder is obstructing [excavation of] the trench.' He ﷺ said, *'I'm coming down.'* He ﷺ got up and he ﷺ had a stone tied against his stomach [from hunger]; we had been three days without tasting food. The Prophet ﷺ took the pickaxe and struck the boulder. It became sand, pouring down. (Al-Bukhari) This hard rock, which none of the companions could break, turned into a mound of sand from the strength of the Prophet's ﷺ blow; and this is evidence of his strength ﷺ.

He ﷺ possessed courage, assertiveness and perseverance in face of the most terrifying circumstances to such a degree that no other has come close to it. This is what enabled the Prophet ﷺ to attend so many battles during his life that was full of struggle. There is not a single report that he ever thought of remaining behind, even the slightest distance. And this is what filled his companions with admiration and love; he was a leader who was obeyed by young and old, even when the order was no more than a signal. It was not only because he was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, but because of what they observed of his courage, which made their own seem insignificant, although among them were heroes whose bravery was legendary.[39]

`Ali ibn Abi Talib ؓ said, "Whenever battle became fierce and the two factions met we would shield ourselves behind the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and none of us would be

[39] From Muhammad, the Perfect Man, pp.188-189.

nearer to the enemy than he ﷺ." (Ahmad and an-*Nasa'i)* And he ﷺ said, "The day of *Badr* I saw that we sought safety with the Prophet ﷺ. He ﷺ was the closest of us to the enemy and the fiercest of us in battle." (Ahmad)

During the battle of *Uhud,* the accursed *Ubayy ibn Khalaf* approached on his horse to kill the Prophet ﷺ and shouted, "O Muhammad! There is no escape for me if you should escape!" The Muslims said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, should a man from among us attack him?" He ﷺ replied, *"Leave him."* When he came near, the Prophet ﷺ took a spear from *al-Harith ibn as-Sammah* ﷺ and shook it so violently that the companions around him dispersed. Then he ﷺ faced him and struck him in the neck so that he tumbled from his horse. He returned to the *Quraysh*, saying, "Muhammad has killed me." They said, "But you are unharmed." He said, "If it had struck all the people it would have killed them. Did he not say, 'I will kill you'? By Allah, if he had spat on me it would have killed me." He died on his way back to *Makkah*.[40]

And in the battle of *Hunayn*, the Muslims fled when *Hawazin* surprised them with a barrage of arrows. But the Prophet ﷺ stood firm before the enemy and said:

"I am the Prophet; it is no lie. I am the son of `Abd al-Muttalib." [41]

O Allah, send blessings and peace upon Your beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Let us join him in Paradise, Your

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[40] *As-Seerah an-Nabawiyyah by Ibn Hisham, 3/174.*
[41] Akhlaaq an-Nabiyyi fil-Qur'an was-Sunnah, 3/1341.

home of honour, and drink from his noble hand, a drink after which we will never feel thirst.

Twenty-Seventh Encounter

The Battle of Badr

In *Ramadhan* of the second year after the *Hijrah*, the great battle of *Badr* took place. Its immediate cause was that the Prophet ﷺ went out with 313 men to intercept a large caravan of the *Quraysh* that was on its way back from Syria. Abu *Sufyan*, the caravan's leader, was extremely alert and cautious. He would ask everyone he met about the Muslims' movements. He learned of their departure from *Madinah* when near the town of *Badr,* so he turned the caravan toward the west to take the coastal route and avoid the dangerous road to *Badr*. He sent a man ahead to inform the people of *Makkah* that their properties were in danger and that the Muslims had prepared to attack the caravan.

When the *Makkans* heard this, they arose to come to the aid of Abu *Sufyan*. None of their chiefs remained behind except *Abu Lahab*; and they gathered the neighbouring tribes, none of them remaining behind except the clan of *`Adiyy*.

When the army reached *Juhfah* they learned that Abu *Sufyan* had escaped harm and that he had told them to return to *Makkah*. They were set to return but *Abu Jahl* encouraged them to go ahead and fight. Three hundred men from *Bani Zahrah* returned and the rest, a thousand men, continued their march. They camped outside *Badr* in an open space behind the hills surrounding the town.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ consulted his companions and found that they were willing and determined to fight and sacrifice for the cause of Allah. This pleased him and he ﷺ said,

"Proceed and receive good tidings, for Allah, the Exalted, Has promised me one of the two parties.[42] *By Allah, it is as if I am now observing those peoples' demise."*

The Prophet ﷺ advanced and camped close to the nearer side of *Badr. Al-Hubab ibn al-Mundhir* advised him to advance and camp at the nearest well to the enemy so that the Muslims could collect water in containers for themselves and then fill the remaining wells with sand so the enemy would have no water. The Prophet ﷺ did what *Hubab* advised.

The Prophet ﷺ spent the eve of the battle, Friday, the 17th of *Ramadhan*, standing in prayer, weeping and supplicating Allah to support him against his enemies. *`Ali ibn Abi Talib* said, "I saw that everyone was asleep except for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who prayed under a tree and wept until the morning." (Ahmad)

`Ali also reported: "We were touched by a sprinkle of rain [the eve of *Badr*] so we sought cover under trees and leather shields. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ spent the night supplicating his Lord and saying, *"If this small band is destroyed You will not be worshipped."* When dawn had broken he ﷺ called, *"Prayer, O servants of Allah!"* The people came out

[42] Either the caravan or the army.

from under the trees and shields and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ led us in prayer and encouraged us to fight. (Ahmad)

Allah supported His Prophet ﷺ and the believers with help and soldiers from Him. He said in the *Qur'an: [Remember] when you asked help of your Lord, and He answered you, "Indeed, I will reinforce you with a thousand of the angels, following one another." And Allah made it not but good tidings and so your hearts would be assured thereby. And victory is not but from Allah. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise. (8:9-10)* And He said*: And Allah gave you victory at Badr while you were few. (3:123)*

He also said: And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them.[43] *And you threw not, [O Muhammad], when you threw, but it was Allah who threw. (8:17)*

The battle began with a duel, and *Hamzah* killed *Shaybah ibn Rabi`ah* and *`Ali* killed *al-Waleed ibn `Utbah. `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah* was injured from the side of the polytheists and *`Ubaydah ibn al-Harith* was injured from the side of the Muslims.

The battle then began and became intense, and there was fierce fighting. Allah reinforced the Muslims with companies of angels to fight beside them and keep their hearts firm. Within an hour the polytheists were defeated and were fleeing. The Muslims pursued them, killing some and taking others prisoner. Seventy of the Polytheists were killed; among them were *`Utbah, Shaybah, al-Waleed ibn*

43 Your strength was insufficient to overcome them, but Allah supported you and gave you victory.

`Utbah, Umayyah ibn Khalaf* and his son, *`Ali, Handhalah ibn Abi Sufyan and Abu Jahl ibn Hisham. Another seventy were taken prisoner.

Among the results of the battle of *Badr* was that the Muslims were strengthened and were now feared in *Madinah* and the adjacent areas. Their trust in Allah ﷻ was increased and they perceived that Allah ﷻ supports His believing servants, although a minority, against disbelievers, who might be a majority. The Muslims acquired fighting skills and learned new manoeuvres, strategies and methods of siege to deprive the enemy of means to continue warfare.

Twenty-Eighth Encounter

The Battle of Uhud

The battle of *Uhud* took place in *Shawwal* of the third year after the *Hijrah*. After their nobles had been killed at *Badr* and they had suffered a calamity the likes of which they had never suffered before, the *Quraysh* were bent on revenge to restore their lost prestige. So *Abu Sufyan* رضي الله عنه began to incite them against the Muslims and recruit various factions. He gathered around three thousand men from the *Quraysh* and their allies, accompanied by their women to prevent them from fleeing and urge them on. He marched with them toward *Madinah* and they camped near Mount *Uhud*.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ consulted his companions about whether he ﷺ should go out to meet them or remain in *Madinah*. The first opinion was that they should not leave the city but fortify themselves within it, so if they entered the Muslims would kill them. But another group of companions preferred to go out to meet the enemy. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ marched out on Friday with a thousand companions. But somewhere between *Madinah* and *Uhud,* the hypocrite, *`Abdullah ibn Ubayy* returned with about one third of the soldiers, saying to them, "Would you oppose my opinion and obey someone else?!"

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ continued on and halted in an area near *Uhud*. He ﷺ placed the army with their backs to the mountain and told them not to fight until he ﷺ ordered them. By Saturday morning, he ﷺ was prepared for battle

along with the seven hundred soldiers, among them fifty horsemen.

He ﷺ put `*Abdullah ibn Jubayr* in command of fifty archers and ordered them to stay at their posts and not to leave them even if they should see birds of prey taking the flesh of the soldiers. They were placed behind the army and ordered to shower the polytheists with arrows so they could not attack the Muslims from behind.

The battle began, and in the early part of the day the Muslims got the advantage and were defeating the polytheists; they retreated to the position of their women. When the archers saw their defeat they left their places in which the Prophet ﷺ had told them to remain, and shouted, "The spoils of war!" Their commander reminded them of the Prophet's ﷺ order but they did not listen, thinking that the polytheists would not be back. They went down after the spoils, leaving a gap in the line of defence.

But the enemy horsemen returned and found the opening unprotected by the archers. They broke through and surrounded the Muslims. Those whom Allah honoured with martyrdom were martyred and the companions retreated. The polytheists closed in on the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They wounded his face, broke his tooth, smashed the helmet on his head and hit him with stones until he ﷺ fell, injured, into one of the holes that Abu `*Amir al-Fasiq* had dug as traps for the Muslims. `*Ali* took his hand to lift him out and *Talhah ibn `Ubaydullah* held him in his lap. Two iron rings from his helmet had pierced his cheek and were pulled out by *Abu `Ubaydah ibn*

al-Jarrah. *Malik ibn Sinan*, the father of *Abu Sa`eed al-Khudri*, sucked out the blood to clean his cheek. *Mus`ab ibn `Umayr* was killed in front of him so he gave the standard to *`Ali ibn Abi Talib*.

The polytheists had surrounded him, determined to do that which Allah was to prevent. Allah prevented it by means of a group of ten Muslims who defended him until they were killed and *Talhah*, who kept on fighting until he drove them back. *Abu Dajanah* shielded him with his back, not moving while arrows struck him. The eye of *Qatadah ibn an-Nu`man* was injured that day, and the Messenger of Allahﷺ pressed it back in its place with his hand. It was thereafter his best and sharpest eye.

When *Ibn Qami'ah*, shouted, "Muhammad ﷺ has been killed," it disheartened the Muslims and most of them fled; but the decree of Allah was predestined. So the Messenger of Allahﷺ went toward the remaining Muslim army. The first to recognize him under his helmet was *Ka`b ibn Malik*, who shouted at the top of his voice, "O company of Muslims, good news! Here is the Messenger of Allahﷺ!" But heﷺ signalled him to be quiet. The Muslims gathered around him and hastened with him to his camp; among them were Abu *Bakr*, *`Umar* , `Ali , *al-Harith ibn as-Sammah* al-Ansari and others. When they had backed up against the mountain, the Prophet saw *Ubayy ibn Khalaf* charging on his horse to kill him so, he threw his spear and hit him at the side of his neck causing him to fall from his horse and run back, defeated, to his people. He

died on the way back to *Makkah*. The Muslims also killed the standard bearer of the polytheists.

The Prophet ﷺ washed the blood from his face and prayed seated due to his wounds. *Handhalah* had been killed while in a state of sexual impurity so he was washed by the angels. And Umm *`Umarah*, *Nusaybah bint Ka`b al-Maziniyyah,* fought valiantly; `Amr ibn Qami'ah had struck her with his sword, wounding her severely. The number of Muslims killed that day was around seventy, and from the polytheists, twenty-three. The *Quraysh* badly mutilated the bodies of the Muslims. Among those killed from the Muslims was The Prophet's ﷺ uncle, *Hamzah*.[44]

[44] Zad al-Ma`ad, 3/193 and Lubab al-Khiyar fi Seerat-il-Mukhtar, p.64.

Twenty-Ninth Encounter

Lessons from the Battle of Uhud

In his book, *Zad al-Ma`ad, Ibn al-Qayyim* cited many of the rulings and noble lessons derived from the battle of *Uhud*, among them:

1. The believers learned the negative consequence of disobedience, loss of courage and dispute, and that what occurred was the result of it. As Allah ﷻ said: *And Allah had certainly fulfilled His promise to you when you were killing them, with His permission, until when you lost courage and fell to disputing about the [Prophet's] order and disobeyed after He had shown you that which you love.*[45] *Among you are some who desire this world, and among you are some who desire the Hereafter. Then He turned you back from them [defeated] that He might test you. And He has forgiven you.* (3:152)

When they experienced the consequence of their disobedience to the Messenger ﷺ, their weakening and their arguments, they became more careful and aware thereafter.

2. Allah's wisdom and method required that His messengers and their followers triumphed at times and are defeated at times, but the outcome was always in their favour. Because if they were continually victorious, non-believers as well as believers would join them, so believers could not be distinguished from others.

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[45] i.e., the spoils of war.

3. Sincere believers were distinguished from hypocrites, for when Allahﷻ gave the Muslims victory over their enemies on the day of *Badr* some entered Islam whose motives were not as they appeared. So, the wisdom of Allahﷻ necessitated a test to differentiate between the believer and the hypocrite. In this battle, the hypocrites showed their true colours and spoke of what they had previously concealed. So, the believers realized that they had an enemy from within and thus could be cautious of them and prepared for them.

4. Allahﷻ tests His servants in both good times and bad through that which they like and which they dislike, in victory and defeat. When they show firm obedience and servitude in what they like and what they dislike, then they are true servants of his.

5. If Allahﷻ had always given them victory in every circumstance and had always subdued their enemies, they would have become oppressive and arrogant. His servants are only kept righteous and balanced through good times and bad, hardship and ease.

6. When Allahﷻ afflicts them with setbacks, loss and defeat, they become humble and submissive, making them deserving of His might and victory.

7. Allahﷻ has prepared for His believing servants positions in His Paradise which they cannot reach through their deeds; they will reach them only through difficulties and trials. So, He gives them the means to reach those positions in the form of problems and ordeals.

8. When enjoying continuous health, wealth and ascendancy, human souls acquire an oppressive and impatient nature. This is a disease that hinders one on his journey to Allah ﷻ and the Hereafter. So, when Allah ﷻ intends to honour a soul, He gives it difficulties and hardships which serve as treatment for that disease, like a doctor who makes a patient drink a bitter medicine or removes diseased parts from him. And if he left him to his own wishes and inclinations, they would destroy him.

9. Martyrdom in the sight of Allah ﷻ is among the highest ranks earned by His allies. The martyrs are His privileged servants who are nearest to Him. In fact, after the rank of *siddeeq* (the intimate and fervent supporter of a prophet) comes that of the *shaheed* (martyr). The only way to attain this rank is through the circumstances leading to it, i.e., being overcome by an enemy.

10. When Allah ﷻ intends to destroy His enemies he provides them with the causes of their destruction. The greatest of these causes after unbelief is their oppression, tyranny and abuse of His sincere allies, their waging war against them and overpowering them. In this way, He ﷻ purifies His servants of their sins and faults. And thereby, He increases the causes of His enemies' destruction.

Thirtieth Encounter

The Prophet's Leniency with His People – 1

The Prophet ﷺ was gentle with his *Ummah*. He was never given a choice between two things but that he chose the easier of them in order to avoid difficulty for his people. He ﷺ said,

"Allah did not send me to cause difficulty or complexity but He sent me as a teacher and to make things easy." (Muslim) And he said, *"Indeed, Allah is kind and loves kindness. He grants for kindness what He does not grant for harshness."* (Abu Dawud – graded as saheeh by al-Albani)

Allah ﷻ described His Prophet ﷺ as having compassion and mercy, saying:

There has certainly come to you a Messenger from among yourselves. Grievous to him is what you suffer; [he is] concerned over you, and to the believers is kind and merciful. (9:128)

An example of this is in the following narration: A man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "I am destroyed, O Messenger of Allah."

He asked, *"And what destroyed you?"*

The man said, "I had intercourse with my wife during [a day of] Ramadhan."

He said, *"Can you find a slave to free?"*

He replied, "No."

He said, *"Can you fast two months of consecutive days?"*

He replied, "No."

He said, *"Can you find food to feed sixty poor people?"*

He replied, "No," and sat down.

The Prophet ﷺ went and brought a basket of dates and said, *"Give this in charity."*

The man said, "Is there anyone poorer than we are? There is no household in *Madinah* more in need of it than us."

The Prophet ﷺ smiled and said, *"Go and feed it to your family."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Notice how lenient the Prophet ﷺ was with this man who had sinned by having relations with his wife during a day of Ramadhan. He ﷺ kept on gently reducing the penalty until he actually gave him the means to expiate his sin and even allowed him to give it to his family on account of their poverty and need. How great was the kindness and compassion of the Prophetﷺ.

*Mu`awiyah ibn al-Hakam as-Sulami*ﷺ reported: "While I was praying with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a man sneezed, so I said, '*Yarhamoka*-Allah' (May Allah have mercy on you). The people gave me angry looks so I said, 'What's wrong with you that you are looking at me?' Then, they started slapping their thighs, and I understood that they meant to silence me so, I kept quiet. The Prophet ﷺ finished the prayer, and I have never before or since seen a better teacher than him. For by Allah, he ﷺ did not distress me, strike me or insult me, but merely said,

'This prayer is not for anything of people's speech. It is only for praising and glorifying Allah and recitation of the Qur'an.' " (Muslim)

An-Nawawi commented: This shows the greatness of the Messenger's ﷺ character, to which Allah ﷻ testified, and his gentle manner with the ignorant man, his kindness and sympathy toward him. It is his example [for us] of leniency with an uninformed person, of how to teach him gently and convey the correct information to his mind.

Another example is in his prohibiting people to continue the fast without a break at night for fear it might have been made obligatory upon them. The same is true when he prayed night prayers during Ramadhan for a few nights until, after many people had begun to assemble, he stopped going out to lead them for fear that this prayer might become obligatory on Muslims.

And another was when he ﷺ entered the *masjid* and found a rope stretched between two pillars. He ﷺ said, *"What is this rope?"* They said, "It is for *Zaynab;* when she becomes tired she holds onto it." He ﷺ said,

"Untie it. Let one of you pray when he has energy, but when he becomes tired he should sit down." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Thirty-First Encounter

The Prophet's Leniency with His People – 2

Concerning the leniency of the Prophet ﷺ with his *Ummah, Anas ibn Malik* ؓ reported: "While we were in the *masjid* with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, a Bedouin came in and urinated in the *masjid*. The companions exclaimed, "Stop, stop!" But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Leave him and do not interrupt him." So, they left him until he finished. Then the Messenger of Allah ﷺ called him over and said to him,

"These masjids are not for urination or anything unclean, but for remembrance of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and recitation of the Qur'an."

He then instructed one of the men, who brought a bucket of water and poured over it. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Another instance was when a young man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, permit me to fornicate." The people approached, rebuking him, but

the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"Come close,"* so he came near him.

He ﷺ said, *"Would you like it for your mother?"*

He answered, "No, by Allah, may Allah make me your ransom."

He ﷺ said, *"And people will not like it for their mothers. Would you like it for your daughter"?*

He answered, "No, by Allah, may Allah make me your ransom."

He ﷺ said, *"And people will not like it for their daughters. Would you like it for your sister?"*

He answered, "No, by Allah, may Allah make me your ransom."

He ﷺ said, *"And people will not like it for their sisters. Would you like it for your paternal aunt?'*

He answered, "No, by Allah, may Allah make me your ransom."

He ﷺ said, *"And people will not like it for their paternal aunts. Would you like it for your maternal aunt?"*

He answered, "No, by Allah, may Allah make me your ransom."

He ﷺ said, *"And people will not like it for their maternal aunts."* Then he ﷺ placed his hand on him and said, *"O Allah, forgive his sin, purify his heart and safeguard his chastity."* The youth was never tempted after that. (Ahmad) In this gentle manner, the Prophet ﷺ was able to affect the heart of that young man and make him see the offensiveness of what he had requested. And this led to his reform and his becoming upright and chaste.

And the Prophet's ﷺ compassion for his people is also shown by what *Ibn `Abbas* ﷺ reported: "While the Prophet

ﷺ was giving an address a man was standing, so he asked about him. They told him, *'Abu Isra'eel* has vowed to stand in the sun and not to sit down, shade himself or speak and to keep a fast.' The Prophet ﷺ said,

'Tell him to speak, to shade himself, to sit down and to complete his fast.' " (Al-Bukhari)

And it is shown by what *`Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`Aas* ؓ reported: "The Prophet ﷺ was informed that I said, 'By Allah, I will fast every day and pray every night as long as I live.' He asked, *'Are you the one who said that?'* I replied, 'I said it, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ.' He ﷺ said,

"You will not be able to do that. So fast and break your fast, sleep and pray. Fast from the month three days, for a good deed is worth ten, so that is like fasting for all time."

In another narration he ﷺ said, *"Have I been told that you fast by day and pray by night?"* `Abdullah said, "Yes, O messenger of Allah." He ﷺ said, *"Don't do it. Fast and break your fast, sleep and pray, for your body has a right on you, your eyes have a right on you, your wife has a right on you and your guests have a right on you. It is sufficient for you to fast from each month three days, and you will have for every good deed the equivalent of ten; that is [like] fasting for all time."*

`Abdullah added, "When I made it more difficult for myself he made it more difficult for me. I told him, 'I have the strength [for more].' So, he ﷺ said, *'Then fast as did Allah's prophet, Dawud, and no more.'* I asked, "What was the fast of

Dawud?' He ﷺ said, *'Half of all time.'* "[46] After he grew old, `Abdullah would say, "I wish I had accepted the concession of Allah's Messenger ﷺ." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

[46] Prophet *Dawud* used to fast every other day.

Thirty-Second Encounter

The Battle of al-Ahzaab

In *Shawwal* of the fifth year, according to the more correct of two statements, the battle of *al-Ahzaab*,[47] also known as the battle of *al-Khandaq*,[48] took place. The background of this battle was that the Prophet ﷺ had evicted the Jews of *Bani an-Nadheer* from *Madinah* the previous year due to their attempt to assassinate him. So, a group of their nobles went to *Makkah* and incited the *Quraysh* to fight the Messenger of Allahﷺ, promising to assist them against him. The *Quraysh* responded positively and agreed to fight him. Then they went on to *Bani Ghatafan* and *Bani Sulaym*, inciting them also, and they agreed as well. After that they went around to all the Arab tribes, calling on them to fight against the Messenger of Allahﷺ.

The *Quraysh* set out with four thousand soldiers led by *Abu Sufyan*. They took with them three hundred horses and 1500 camels. Seven hundred from *Bani Sulaym* joined them at *Marr ath-Thahran*, as did one thousand from *Bani Asad* and *Fazarah*, four hundred from *Asja`* and four hundred from *Bani Murrah*. The total from the tribes that gathered for the battle of *al-Khandaq* was 10,000. These were the confederates.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ learned of their advance from *Makkah,* he ﷺ consulted the people. *Salman*

[47] i.e., the Confederate Parties.
[48] i.e., the Trench.

al-Farisi suggested digging a trench to prevent the enemy from entering *Madinah*, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered it to be done. The Muslims began excavation, and the Messenger himself participated in it. The trench was dug in front of Mount *Sal`,* and the Muslims kept their backs to the mountain with the trench between them and the unbelievers. They finished the trench within six days, so the Prophet ﷺ and those with him, whose number was three thousand, were fortified. He ordered that the women and children be kept in a fortress inside *Madinah.*

*Al-Baraa' ibn `Azib*ﷺ reported: "We were digging the trench when we came upon a huge hard rock which could not be broken by the pickaxe. They complained of it to the Prophetﷺ. When he saw it he threw aside his cloak, took the axe and said, *"Bismillah."* He ﷺ struck it once and one third of it broke. He ﷺ said,

"Allahu akbar! I have been given the keys of Syria, and by Allah, I can see its red palaces now."

Then he ﷺ struck it a second time and another third broke. He ﷺ said,

"Allahu akbar! I have been given the keys of Persia, and by Allah, I can see the white palace of al-Madaa'in." Then he struck it a third time and the rest of the stone broke. He ﷺ said, *"Allahu akbar! I have been given the keys of Yemen, and by Allah, I can see the gates of Sanaa from my place now."*

Huyayy ibn Akhtab went to *Bani Quraydhah*, who had a pact with the Messenger of Allahﷺ, and he kept on pressing them until they broke the agreement and joined with the

polytheists in the war against Allah's Messengerﷺ. Difficulties increased for the Muslims and hypocrisy appeared. Some from *Bani Harithah* asked permission of the Prophet ﷺ to return to *Madinah*, saying that their homes were unprotected. But Allahﷻ revealed:

And they were not unprotected; they only wished to flee. (33:13)

Bani Salamah also thought of giving up, but Allahﷻ kept the two parties steadfast.

The polytheists continued the siege of Allah's Messengerﷺ for a month but no direct battle occurred due to the trench by which Allahﷻ prevented them from reaching the Muslims. The Prophet's ﷺ biographers related:

Fear became intense on a day of "*al-Khandaq*"; people became discouraged and feared for their children and properties. The polytheists were seeking a shallow part of the trench through which their horses could cross and a few of them managed to do so. Among them was *`Amr ibn Wudd,* who called for a duel although he was a man of seventy years. `Ali ﷺ accepted his challenge and killed him.

By morning, a large company had gathered among whom was *Khalid ibn al-Waleed*ﷺ. Skirmishes and exchanges of arrows continued until night and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was unable to pray `asr that day until after sunset. He ﷺ said,

"They kept us from the middle prayer; may Allah fill their houses and graves with fire."

Then Allah ﷻ brought about a matter which caused a setback to the enemy and broke their unity. *Na`eem ibn Mas`ud* ﷺ had embraced Islam, something unknown to the polytheists and Jews. He went back and forth between the *Quraysh and Bani Quraydhah* deceiving them with false information and causing mistrust between them. Then, Allah ﷻ sent a violent wind, and *Abu Sufyan* ﷺ said to his companions, "You are not in a secure settlement; the camels and horses have expired, *Bani Quraydhah* have left us, and we have been afflicted by the wind as you see. So depart, for I am departing." Three of the polytheists had been killed and six from among the Muslims.[49]

[49] See *Al-Wafa bi-Ahwaal* al-Mustafa, pp.713-714, and *Zad al-*Ma`ad, 3/269-275.

Thirty-Third Encounter

The Prophet's Justice

Islam came with complete justice, as stated in the *Qur'an*: *Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. (16:90) And do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. (5:8)*

Among the illustrations of the Prophet's ﷺ justice is that when an influential woman from *Bani Makhzum* stole something, the *Quraysh* were concerned about the matter and wished to intercede with the Prophet ﷺ to prevent the legal punishment from being carried out on her. They said, "Who will speak to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on her behalf?" And they said, "And who would dare to other than *Usamah ibn Zayd*ﷺ, who is loved by the Messenger of Allahﷺ?" So they brought her to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and *Usamah*ﷺ spoke to him. The Messenger's ﷺ face reddened [with anger] and he ﷺ said,

"Would you interfere in one of the legal punishments revealed by Allah?!"

*Usamah*ﷺ said, "Ask forgiveness for me, O Messenger of Allah."

That evening the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood on the pulpit and spoke. He praised Allahﷻ as He *should* be praised and then said,

"Those before you were destroyed because when a high born person stole, they would leave him but when a humble person stole they would carry out the punishment on him. By the One in whose hand is my soul, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, had stolen I would have cut off her hand." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Such was the justice of the Prophetﷺ, which did not distinguish between a person of high and low class, between the rich and the poor or between the ruler and the ruled, for all are equal in the balance of right and justice.

Another example is the following narration. An-*Nu`man ibn Basheer*ﷺ reported: "My father gave me a gift, but [my mother] *`Amrah bint Rawahah*, said, 'I will not agree until the Messenger of Allah ﷺ witnesses.' So [my father] went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, 'I have given my son from *`Amrah bint Rawahah* a gift and she told me to make you a witness.' He asked,

'Have you given your other children something similar?'

He said, 'No.'

He ﷺ said,

'Then fear Allah and act with justice among your children.'

So, he returned and took back the gift." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

In another narration the Prophet ﷺ said,

"Do you have sons other than him?" The father said, "Yes." Heﷺ said, *"Have you given all of them the same as this?"* He

said, "No." So he ﷺsaid, *"I will not be a witness to something unjust."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Dhul-Khuwaysirah at-Tamimi approached while the Prophet ﷺ was dividing some properties. He said, "O Messenger of Allahﷻ, be just." The Prophet ﷺ said,

"Woe to you! And who is just if I am not just? I would be disappointed and defeated if I was not just." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) For he ﷺ is the one that Allahﷻ chose and trusted with His revelation, so how could he not be just, and how could he not be even-handed? And he is the one who said,

"The equitable will be near Allah on pedestals of light, those who are just in their judgements and among their people and in that for which they are responsible." (Muslim)

As for justice among his wives, the Prophet ﷺ upheld it as it should be upheld. He ﷺ would be as fair as possible regarding his time with them, expenditures, etc., and treated them equally whether at home or travelling. He ﷺ would spend a night with each one and give each one equally from what he possessed. He built an apartment for each, and when he ﷺ travelled he would draw lots between them and take the one whose name came up. He was never negligent of this, even during his final illness when he was taken to each of his wives in turn. But when it became too difficult for him, and they knew he would like to stay in the house of *`A'ishah*, they permitted him to be nursed in her house, so he remained there until he passed away. And in spite of his complete justice with them, he would apologize to Allahﷻ and say,

"O Allah, this is my apportionment in what I control, so do not blame me for what You control and I do not control." [50] (Abu Dawud and at-Tirmidhi)[51]

And the Prophet ﷺ warned against showing favour to one wife over another and ﷺ said,

"Anyone who has two wives and shows favour to one of them will come on the Day of Resurrection with half his body drooping." (Muslim)

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[50] i.e., the feeling in his heart.
[51] Akhlaq an-Nabiyyi fil-Qur'an was-Sunnah, 3/1271.

Thirty-Fourth Encounter

The Jewish Plots and the Prophet's Attitude Toward Them

We have mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ drew up a treaty with the Jews of *Madinah* and a mutual agreement that there would be no transgression. But they quickly broke that agreement and began to do that for which they are infamous: disregarding their covenants and devising plots and conspiracies.

Among the deceptions practiced by the Jews of *Bani Qaynuqaa`* was that they took advantage of the Prophet's ﷺ involvement with the Muslims in the battle of *Badr*. One of them harassed a Muslim woman and exposed her body in front of some people in the marketplace. When the woman screamed a man among the Muslims killed the Jew. The Jews then gathered around him and killed him. When the Prophetﷺ returned from *Badr,* he ﷺ called the Jews and questioned them about the evil incidents that had taken place. They responded with harsh words, sent back the page of the treaty and prepared for battle. So, the Prophet ﷺ besieged them, and when they saw that they could not win against the Muslims they asked the Prophet ﷺ to allow them to leave with their women and children in exchange for their properties. He accepted that from them and evicted them from *Madinah*. The Muslims confiscated many weapons and other instruments from their fortresses.

As for the Jews of *Bani an-Nadheer*, they had broken the pact and attempted to assassinate the Messenger of

Allahﷻ. For in the fourth year after the *Hijrah*, the Prophet ﷺ went to them to seek their help in the payment of blood money. But at the same time they were waiting behind a wall planning to kill him. *`Amr ibn Jahhash* was to throw a millstone down on the Prophetﷺ, but he received information of it from the heaven, so he got up and went back to *Madinah*. After that, the Prophet ﷺ penalized them by exiling them from *Madinah* to *Khaybar*. They carried their possessions on six hundred camels and destroyed their houses with their own hands before leaving for Khaybar.

And as for the Jews of *Bani Quraydhah*, it has been mentioned that they broke the treaty and allied themselves with the polytheists and other parties to fight against the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the battle of *al-Khandaq*. So, after Allahﷻ defeated and dispersed the confederates and they had departed, the Prophet ﷺ went out with a company of three thousand to punish *Bani Quraydhah*. He besieged them and tightened the blockade, so they requested of the Prophet ﷺ that *Sa`d ibn Mu`adh* ؓ be allowed to give the verdict about them. *Sa`d*ؓ ruled that their men who were able to fight would be killed, their women and children would be taken captive and their properties confiscated and divided. So, their men were executed by the sword with the exception of a few. This was the punishment the Jews had brought upon themselves when they asked that *Sa`d ibn Mu`adh* ؓ judge concerning them. They thought he would favour them because of their relationship with the *Aus* tribe.

However, the Jews punished their captives in ways worse than that. For in the Old Testament, Numbers 31:9-

18 it says: "And the children of Israel took all the women of *Midian* captives and their children, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods. And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt and all their goodly castles with fire. And Moses was angry and said unto them, "Have ye saved all the women alive? Now therefore kill every male among the children, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the female children that have not known a man by lying with him, keep them alive for yourselves."

But indeed, Moses (peace be upon him) would never have ordered this mass extermination. This is how they distorted their scripture, and so it is their law regarding captives.

Thirty-Fifth Encounter

Why Was Battle Ordained?

The Prophet ﷺ did not wield a sword with which to force people to enter Islam, for the *Qur'an* is crystal clear in its refusal of this concept. Allah ﷻ has said:

There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. (2:256) Then, would you compel the people in order that they become believers? (10:99) For you is your religion, and for me is my religion. (109:6) But this does not mean that the state should remain powerless in the face of internal or external aggression, for Allah ﷻ has given the believers permission to defend themselves and to restore their rights in proportion to the injustice done to them, but not more than that.

And Allah ﷻ, said:

So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you. (2:194) Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress. (2:190) But if they fight you, then kill them. (2:191)

This shows that the legality of war is confined to self defence and protection of the *Ummah* from aggression and conspiracies from within and from without. When we look at the history of armed conflict in Islam, this fact is confirmed. For when the *Makkan*s' oppression increased, they compelled the Prophet ﷺ to leave his home after having plotted to kill him, and it was they who began aggression against the Muslims by unjustly forcing them to

leave their homes. So, after the *Hijrah*, Allah ﷻ permitted the emigrants to fight the polytheists of *Quraysh*, saying: *Permission [to retaliate] has been given to those who are being fought, because they were wronged, and indeed, Allah is competent to give them victory. [They are] those who have been evicted from their homes without right – only because they say, "Our Lord is Allah."* (22:39-40) Thus, the Prophet ﷺ was first to oppose only the *Quraysh* and not the other Arabs.

But when other Arab polytheists besides the people of *Makkah* turned against the Muslims and allied themselves with their enemies, Allah ﷻ ordered them to fight all of the polytheists, and said:

And fight against the disbelievers collectively as they fight against you collectively. (9:36)

This is how jihad became general against all of the pagans who had no divine scripture, and it is the affirmation of the Prophet's ﷺ saying,

"I have been commanded to fight the people until they say, 'La ilaha ill-Allah', so if they say it their lives and properties are protected from me by its right, and their account is with Allah." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And when the Muslims found betrayal from the Jews after they broke the treaty and aided the polytheists in their war, Allah ﷻ ordered fighting against them also, saying:

If you fear from a people betrayal, throw [their treaty] back to them, [putting you] on equal terms. Indeed, Allah does not like traitors. (8:5) Fighting them became obligatory until they offered the

jizyah tax in submission so that Muslims would be safe from them.[52]

Similarly, the Prophet ﷺ did not begin hostilities with the Christians. *Shaykh* al-Islam *Ibn Taymiyyah* said, "He did not fight against any of the Christians until after he sent his messengers, following the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*, to all the rulers, inviting them to Islam. He sent them to Caesar, *Chosroes, al-Muqawqas, an-Najashi* and the Arab rulers to the east and the north. Some of them entered Islam, but the Christians of Syria deliberately killed some of their dignitaries who had embraced Islam. So, the Christians had first fought the Muslims and then killed those of their people who accepted Islam out of tyranny and injustice. Otherwise, the Prophet ﷺ had sent his messengers to invite people to Islam voluntarily, not forcefully. He ﷺ never compelled anyone to accept Islam."[53]

Thus, the battles of Allah's Messenger ﷺ were based on the following principles:

1. The polytheists of *Quraysh* were considered enemy combatants because they initiated aggression.

2. The Jews were observed to have betrayed and gone over to the side of the polytheists.

3. Any Arab tribe that transgressed against the Muslims was to be fought until it accepted Islam.

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52 Nur al-Yaqeen, p. 84-85.
53 Qa'idah Mukhtasirah fi Qitaal al-Kuffar wa Muhadanatihim, p. 135-136.

4. Jews and Christians who committed aggression were to be fought until they accepted Islam or paid the *jizyah* tax.

5. Anyone who enters Islam has protected his life and property, and Islam cancels what occurred before it.[54]

[54] Nur al-Yaqeen, p. 85.

Thirty-Sixth Encounter

The Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*

In the sixth year, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced his intent to perform *`Umrah* and set out with 1400 men, unarmed except for the sheathed sword normally carried by a traveller. His companions drove with them the sacrificial animals. When the *Quraysh* learned of this, they gathered to prevent them from reaching *al-Masjid al-Haraam*.

As they neared *Makkah,* the Prophet ﷺ led his companions in *salat al-khawf*.[55] Then, he started toward *Makkah* but his she-camel, *al-Qaswa*, sat down. They said, "She has become obstinate," but he replied,

"She has not become obstinate, but has been prevented as the elephant[56] was prevented. By Allah, the Quraysh will not ask of me anything today which enhances the sanctity of Allah's religious rites and symbols but that I will give it to them." (Al-Bukhari)

Then he ﷺ shouted at his camel and she got up. He ﷺ returned to a well at *Hudaybiyyah* having little water, and pulled an arrow from his quiver, jabbing it into the well. The water flowed so abundantly that they scooped it up in their hands.

Budayl ibn Warqaa' al Khuza'i informed the *Quraysh* of the Prophet's ﷺ peaceful intent. They then sent *`Urwah ibn*

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[55] A form of prayer performed at times of fear when facing an enemy.
[56] Which led the army that had come to destroy the *Ka`bah* in the year of the Prophet's birth.

Mas`ud*ؓ, who was told something similar. He also noticed how much the companions loved the Prophet ﷺ and obeyed him; he went back and informed the *Quraysh* of what he had seen and heard. Then they sent a man from *Bani Kinanah* named *al-Hulays ibn `Alqamah, and after him, *Mikraz ibn Hafs*. While he was talking to the Messenger of Allahﷺ, *Suhayl ibn `Amr*ؓ approached. The Prophet ﷺ said,

"Your matter has now become easy." [57]

A peace treaty was drawn up between the two sides. If the Muslims had chosen to fight at that time they would have been victorious, but they wanted to uphold the sanctity of the *Ka`bah*. The treaty consisted of the following:

1. Both parties would cease hostilities for a period of ten years.
2. The parties would not interfere with the free movement of one another.
3. The Prophet ﷺ would return that year, but the Muslims would be permitted to enter *Makkah* the following year.
4. Any Muslim man coming from the *Quraysh* to join the Muslims would be sent back, but any man going from the Muslims to *Quraysh* would not be sent back.
5. Any tribes other than the *Quraysh* that wished to enter an alliance with Muhammad ﷺ were free to do so, and any

[57] He saw optimism in the name "*Suhayl*", which means easy or lenient.

that wished to enter an alliance with the *Quraysh* were free to do so.[58]

Results of the Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*

Many of the companions were opposed to this treaty and considered its clauses unfair and biased against the Muslims. But with time they, perceived its positive results and beneficial effects. Among them were:

1. The *Quraysh's* acknowledgement of the Muslim state - for an agreement can only be drawn up between two equals. This had its effect on the other tribes.

2. Fear was introduced into the hearts of the polytheists and hypocrites and many of them now expected that Islam would triumph. Signs of this were apparent in its acceptance by a number of prominent *Qurayshites* such as *Khalid ibn al-Waleed*ﷺ *and `Amr ibn al-`Aas*ﷺ.

3. The opportunity was increased to spread Islam and make it known to people, which led to its acceptance by many of the tribes.

4. The Muslims were no longer in danger from the *Quraysh,* so they could concentrate on the threat from the Jews and other hostile tribes. Thus, the battle of *Khaybar* took place after the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah.*

5. Negotiations leading to the treaty allowed the allies of *Quraysh* to understand the position of the Muslims and sympathize with it. When *al-Hulays ibn `Alqamah* saw them reciting the *talbiyah* for *`Umrah,* he returned to his associates

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[58] See Al-Wafaa, p.716 and Lubaab al-Khiyaar, p.81-83.

and said, "I saw the sacrificial animals garlanded and marked, so I do not think they should be prevented from the House of Allah."

6. The treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* enabled the Prophet ﷺ to prepare for the battle of *Mu'tah*, which was a new step in extending the call to Islam outside the Arabian Peninsula.

7. The treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* enabled the Prophet ﷺ to send letters to the rulers of the Persians, Byzantines and Copts, inviting them to Islam.

8. The treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* led directly to the conquest of *Makkah*.

Thirty-Seventh Encounter

The Prophet's Faithfulness

Islam is a religion of loyalty and respect for promises, contracts and covenants. Allah ﷻ has said:

O you who have believed, fulfil [all] agreements. (5:1)

And He ﷻ said:

Fulfil [every] commitment; indeed, the commitment is that [about which one will be] questioned. (17:34)

And He ﷻ cited as being among the people of understanding: *Those who fulfil the covenant of Allah and do not break the contract. (13:20)*

When two messengers came to the Prophet ﷺ from *Musaylimah the Liar*[59] and said what they said, he told them, *"Was it not that an envoy is not killed, I would have struck you both with the sword."* So, it became part of his *Sunnah* not to kill an envoy. (Abu Dawud)

From the examples of the Prophet's ﷺ adherence to agreements with non-believers was that of the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*, which he drew up with the representative of *Quraysh, Suhayl ibn `Amr* ؓ. One of the treaty's clauses stated that any man coming from the *Quraysh* to join the Muslims must be sent back, and while they were still in the process of writing the rest of the treaty, *Abu Jandal* ؓ, the

[59] i.e., the false prophet.

son of *Suhayl ibn `Amr* approached bound in chains. He had managed to come from the valley of *Makkah* and join the Muslims.

Suhayl said, "O Muhammad, this is the first one whose return I demand." The Prophet ﷺ said, *"We have not yet completed the document."* He replied, "Then I will never make any agreement with you." The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Give him to me with compensation."* He said, "I will not give him to you." The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Yes, do so." Suhayl* said, "I will not." Abu *Jandal* began to shout at the top of his lungs, "O company of Muslims! Shall I be returned to the polytheists and tortured to renounce my religion after I have come as a Muslim?!" The Messenger of Allah ﷺ told him,

"O Abu Jandal, be patient and expect reward. For Allah will bring about for you and those oppressed with you a relief and a way out. We have made a peace treaty with the people and given them a promise on that, and they have given us a promise in the name of Allah, so do not betray it." (Al-Bukhari)

Similarly, when *Abu Baseer*, from the tribe of *Thaqeef* who were allied with the *Quraysh,* escaped, he went to the Prophetﷺ. The *Quraysh* sent two men after him to bring him back and the Prophet ﷺ agreed to return him according to the conditions of the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*. This is clear evidence of the Prophet's ﷺ respect for and adherence to agreements and pacts, even in a case where it appeared to be unfair to Muslims.

Another example of his observance of agreements with non-Muslims is what was related by *al-Baraa' ibn `Azib*ﷺ*:* When the Prophet ﷺ intended to perform `*Umrah* [in the year following the treaty], he sent word to the *Makkans* requesting permission to enter the city. They had stipulated that he [and his companions] could stay there only three nights, that they could enter only with their swords sheathed and that they would not invite anyone to Islam.

When these clauses were being inscribed by `*Ali ibn Abi Talib* ﷺ, he wrote: This is what has been agreed to by Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They said, "If we knew you were the Messenger of Allah we would not have prevented you and would have followed you. Rather, write: This is what has been agreed to by Muhammad ibn `Abdullah."

He ﷺ said, *"By Allah, I am Muhammad ibn `Abdullah, and by Allah, I am the Messenger of Allah,"* but told `Ali ﷺ, *"Erase 'Messenger of Allah'."* `Ali ﷺ said, "By Allah, I will never erase it." So, he said, *"Show it to me."* And when he showed it to him the Prophet ﷺ erased it with his hand.

After they had entered *Makkah* and spent three days there, the *Quraysh* came to `Ali ﷺ and said, "Tell your companion to leave." When he conveyed it to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ he said, *"Yes,"* and departed. (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) He complied with their conditions and did not stay beyond the three nights.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ warned against treachery and breach of promise, saying,

"Whoever gives a man a pledge of security, and then kills him – I am disassociated from the killer even if the victim should be an unbeliever." (An-Nasa'i - graded saheeh by al-Albani)

And he ﷺ said, *"No people breaks a treaty but that there is killing between them."* (Al-Hakim - graded saheeh by al-Albani)

The Prophet ﷺ sought refuge in Allah ﷻ from such behaviour and said,

"I seek refuge in You from infidelity, for indeed, it is the worst trait." (Abu Dawud and an-Nasa'i – graded as hasan by al-Albani) He ﷺ prohibited it and said,

"For every traitor there will be a banner by which he will be known on the Day of Resurrection." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

He ﷺ also made it clear that he would not break a promise, saying, *"I would not violate an agreement."* (Ahmad and Abu Dawud – graded saheeh by al-Albani)

Thirty-Eighth Encounter

The Conquest of Makkah

It had been mentioned in the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* that the tribe of *Khuza`ah* entered an alliance with the Prophet ﷺ and that *Bakr* had allied with the *Quraysh*. Then it happened that a man from *Khuza`ah* heard a man from *Bakr* reciting poetry insulting to the Prophet ﷺ, so he struck him and injured him. This caused hostility between them and *Bani Bakr* determined to fight *Khuza`ah*. They asked for help from the *Quraysh* who supplied them with weapons and animals to ride. Some from the *Quraysh* secretly fought along with them, among them: *Sufwan ibn Umayyah*, *`Ikramah ibn Abi Jahl*ؓ *and Suhayl ibn `Amr*ؓ. *Khuza`ah* sought refuge in the *Haram of Makkah but Bani Bakr* did not observe the sanctity of the *Haram* and fought them there, killing more than twenty.

Thus, the *Quraysh* had violated the peace treaty between themselves and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ by assisting *Bani Bakr* against *Khuza`ah*, the Prophet's ﷺ allies. When *Khuza`ah* informed the Prophet ﷺ of what they did he said, *"I will defend you as I defend myself."*

After that, the *Quraysh* regretted what they had done but it was too late. They sent *Abu Sufyan*ؓ to the Prophet ﷺ to renew the treaty of *Hudaybiyyah* and extend its term, but the Prophet ﷺ ignored him and did not respond. He tried to get some of the influential companions to intercede for him with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ but they all refused.

So, *Abu Sufyan* returned to *Makkah* without having obtained any kind of agreement.

Faced with the *Quraysh's* violation of their agreements, the Prophet ﷺ decided on the conquest of *Makkah* to teach a lesson to its unbelievers, but he ﷺ concealed this matter in order to surprise the polytheists in their home territory. He ﷺ sent word to the neighbouring Arab tribes: *Aslam, Ghifar*, *Muzaynah, Juhaynah, Ashja`* and *Sulaym* until the number of Muslim soldiers had reached ten thousand. The Prophet ﷺ appointed Abu *Ruhm al-Ghifari* in charge of *Madinah* and set out on Wednesday, the 10th of *Ramadhan.* They put up their standards and flags at *Qadeed.*

The *Quraysh* were unaware of the Prophet's ﷺ march so they sent *Abu Sufyan* to find out some information. They told him, "If you should meet Muhammad, secure from him for us a guarantee of security." *Abu Sufyan* set out with *Hakeem ibn Hazaam and Budayl ibn Warqaa'*. When they saw the camp they were alarmed. *Al-`Abbas* (the Prophet's uncle) heard the voice of *Abu Sufyan* and called to him. He said, "This is the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with ten thousand men." So *Abu Sufyan* accepted Islam and al-*`Abbas* took him under his protection. He accompanied him and his two companions to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and they too entered Islam.

The Prophet ﷺ told *al-`Abbas* to take *Abu Sufyan* to the road where the Muslim army was to pass and let him see their strength for himself. *Al-`Abbas* suggested to the

Prophet ﷺ that he grant something to *Abu Sufyan*ﷺ of which he could be proud, as this would please him. So, he ﷺ said, *"Whoever enters the house of Abu Sufyan will be safe, and whoever enters al-Masjid al-Haraam will be safe, and whoever closes the door of his house will be safe."*

And he ﷺ prohibited fighting and ordered his generals not to kill any except those who fought them. The Muslims met no resistance, except for *Khalid ibn al-Waleed*ﷺ. He met *Sufwan ibn Umayyah*ﷺ*, Suhayl ibn `Amr*ﷺ and *`Ikramah ibn Abi Jahl*ﷺ among a group from the *Quraysh at al-Khandamah*, who tried to prevent their entry, drew their weapons and shot them with arrows. *Khalid* ordered those with him to fight them. Thirteen men from the polytheists were killed and they were defeated. From the Muslims, *Karz ibn Jabir*ﷺ and *Hubaysh ibn Khalid ibn Rabi`ah*ﷺ were killed.

The Prophet ﷺ set up his tent in *Hujun* and entered *Makkah* as a conqueror; and the people accepted Islam. He performed *tawaaf* around the *Ka`bah* on his camel. There were 360 idols in the vicinity of the *Ka`bah*, so every time he came to one of them, he would point at it with his stick and say, *"Truth has come and falsehood has been departed."* At that, the statue would fall on its face, broken; the largest of them represented the goddess, *Hubal*, and was near the *Ka`bah.*

The Prophet ﷺ then went to *Maqaam Ibraheem* and prayed behind it two *rak`ahs*. After that he addressed the people and ﷺ said,

"O Quraysh, what do you think I should do with you?" They said, "What is good. You are a generous brother and the son of a generous brother."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

"No blame will there be on you today. Go, for you are free."

He ﷺ pardoned them after Allah ﷻ had empowered him over them, and thus presented an exemplary illustration of amnesty and forgiveness toward offenders that have been conquered. Then, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sat on the hill of *Safa* and accepted pledges of submission and obedience; people continued coming, group after group.

The conquest was on Friday, with ten days remaining of R*amadhan*. The Prophet ﷺ stayed in *Makkah* fifteen nights and then marched to *Hunayn*. In *Makkah,* he left *`Uttab ibn Usayd*ﷺ to lead the people in prayer and *Mu`adh ibn Jabal*ﷺ to teach them the *Sunnah and fiqh*.

Thirty-Ninth Encounter

The Prophet's Pardon

Allah ordered His Prophet ﷺ to pardon people and said: *So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter.* (3:159)

And He said: *So pardon them and overlook [their misdeeds]. Indeed, Allah loves doers of good. (5:13)*

The Prophet ﷺ used to like pardon and prefer clemency. He would not resort to punishment unless there was no way to avoid it. There are many well-known instances of pardon in the Prophet's biography, among them that which he granted the people of *Makkah* after the conquest.

Among them also is what was related by *Abu Hurayrah*: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent a cavalry toward *Najd* and they brought back a man from the tribe of *Bani Hanifah* called *Thumamah ibn Uthaal*, a noble from the people of *Yamamah*. They tied him to one of the pillars of the masjid. The Prophet ﷺ went over to him and said, *"What do you have in mind, O Thumamah?"* He replied, "I have something good, O Muhammad. If you should kill me, you would kill a person who has killed, and if you should set me free, you would do a favour to one who is grateful, and if you want wealth, then ask and you will be given what you wish." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left him until the next day,

when he ﷺ said, *"What do you have in mind, O Thumamah?"* He said, "What I have told you: if you should kill me, you would kill a person who has killed, and if you should set me free, you would do a favour to one who is grateful, and if you want wealth, then ask and you will be given what you wish." So, the Messenger of Allahﷺ left him until the next day, when he said, *"What do you have in mind, O Thumamah?"* He said, "What I have told you: if you should kill me, you would kill a person who has killed, and if you should set me free, you would do a favour to one who is grateful, and if you want wealth, then ask and you will be given what you wish."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ then said, *"Release Thumamah."* So, *Thumamah*ؓ went to a palm garden near the *masjid* and bathed. Then he entered the masjid and said, "I testify that there is no god but Allah and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and messenger. O Muhammad, by Allah, there was no face on the surface of the earth more hated by me than yours, but now your face is the most beloved face to me. By Allah, there was no religion on the surface of the earth more hated by me than yours, but now your religion is the most beloved one to me. By Allah, there was no city on the surface of the earth more hated by me than yours, but now your city is the most beloved one to me. Your cavalry took me while I was intending *`Umrah,* so what do you think?" Allah's Messengerﷺ gave him good tidings and ordered him to perform *`Umrah.*

When he went to *Makkah*, someone there said, "Have you become *a Sabian?" Thumamah*ؓ replied, "No, by Allah.

I have embraced Islam with Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. No, by Allah. Not a single grain of wheat will come to you from *Yamamah* unless the Messenger of Allahﷺ permits it." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) Notice how pardon can change hearts, alter conditions, transform attitudes and disperse the darkness's of disbelief and error.

Another example is the Prophet's ﷺ pardon of the Jewish woman who put poison in his meat; but when he ate from it, he did not swallow it. However, he later had her executed in legal retribution for *Bishr ibn al-Baraa' ibn Ma`rur*, who had swallowed the meat and died from the effect of the poison.

And yet another example is the narration *by Jabir* : We went out on a campaign toward *Najd,* and when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned, we returned with him. Just before noon, we came to a valley with many thorny trees. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ dismounted, and the men went and sought shade under the trees. He also sat under a tree and hung his sword on it.

We slept briefly and suddenly heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ calling us, so we went to him and found a Bedouin sitting near him. He ﷺ said,

*"This man pulled down my sword while I was asleep, and I awoke while it was drawn in his hand. He said to me, 'Who can save you from me?' I said, 'Allah.' And here he is, sitting." And the Messenger of Allah did not punish him. (*Al-Bukhari*)*

Fortieth Encounter

The Prophet of Mercy – 3

The Prophet's Mercy towards Children

The Prophet ﷺ was the most merciful of people to children. *Abu Hurayrah* ؓ reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once kissed *al-Hasan*ؓ, the son of `Ali ؓ, while *al-Aqra` ibn Habis at-Tamimi*ؓ was seated with him. *Al-Aqra`*ؓ said, "I have ten children and have not kissed one of them." The Messenger of Allah ﷺ looked at him and said,

"He who does not show mercy will not receive mercy." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

And *`A'ishah* reported: Some Bedouins came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said, "Do you kiss your little boys?" He said, *"Yes."* They said, "But we, by Allah, do not." So, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

"Can I do anything if Allah has taken mercy away from you?" (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

These two narrations are evidence of the Prophet's ﷺ compassion toward children, and that kissing them is a sign of mercy and compassion. His words:

"He who does not show mercy will not receive mercy"

show that the consequence is of the same type as the deed, for one who deprives children of mercy and compassion will himself be deprived of them by Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

Another illustration of the Prophet's ﷺ mercy toward children is when he came to his son, *Ibraheem*, as he was dying and his eyes filled with tears.

He ﷺ said, *"Indeed, the eye sheds tears and the heart grieves, but we will not say except what pleases our Lord. Indeed, O Ibraheem, we are grieved by parting with you."* (Al-Bukhari)

The Prophet ﷺ showed due submission to his Lord through patience and acceptance of His decree. And he showed due compassion for his son by his tears and sadness at parting with him, and that is of the most complete illustrations of servitude to Allah ﷻ.

And when the son of his daughter died, and his eyes filled with tears, *Sa`d ibn `Ubadah* رضي الله عنه said to him, "What is this, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ ?"

He ﷺ said, *"It is mercy which Allah has put in the hearts of his servants, and Allah shows mercy to His merciful servants."* (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Another example is when he ﷺ visited a Jewish boy who was ill and who had served him. He ﷺ told him, *"Say, 'La ilaha ill-Allah.' "* The boy looked at his father, who said to him, "Obey *Abul-Qasim*," so he said it. The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Praise be to Allah who saved him from the Hellfire."* (Al-Bukhari)

Another is in his kindness to the young brother of *Anas ibn Malik* رضي الله عنه. He used to play with a small bird, and it died. The boy was sad, so the Prophet ﷺ of mercy went to visit him, console him and cheer him up. He ﷺ said to him, *"O Abu `Umayr, what has it done – the nughayr?"*[60] (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

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[60] A small bird belonging to the boy.

`Abdullah ibn Shaddad* heard this report from his father: that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ once came out to lead us in the *`ishaa' prayer carrying [either] *Hasan or Husayn*. He stepped up, put him down and said, "*Allahu akbar*" to begin the prayer. During the prayer, he prostrated for a long time and I lifted my head and saw the small boy on his back. After he finished the prayer, the people were saying, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, you prostrated during the prayer for such a long time that we thought something had happened, or that revelation had come to you."

He ﷺ replied, *"It was none of that, but my grandson climbed onto my back and I did not want to stop him from fulfilling his need."* (An-Nasa'i – graded saheeh by al-Albani)

And when the Prophet ﷺ used to visit the *Ansar* he would greet their children and stroke their heads. (*An-Nasa'i* – graded *saheeh by al-Albani*) And he used to go to the small children and bless them and chew dates for them. (Muslim) Blessing them means that he would put his noble hand on them and supplicate for them.

He ﷺ also used to pray while carrying [his granddaughter] *Umamah bint Zaynab*. When he prostrated, he would put her down, and when he stood, up he would carry her. May the blessings and peace of Allah be upon this noble and merciful Prophet.

Forty-First Encounter

The Prophet of Mercy – 4

The Prophet's Mercy towards Servants and Slaves

Before Islam, servants and slaves had no rights and no honour. But when Allah ﷻ favoured the world with the message of Islam, the Prophet ﷺ relieved them of injustice, established rights for them and threatened those who oppressed, belittled or cursed them with painful punishment in the Hereafter. *Al-Ma`rur ibn Suwayd* said, "I saw *Abu Dharr* ؓ wearing an ornament and his servant boy wearing a similar one. I asked him about it, and he mentioned that he had once insulted a man during the time of the Prophet, demeaning him through his mother. The man went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and told him about that. The Prophet ﷺ said,

"You are a person retaining some traits of the days of ignorance. Servants are your brothers whom Allah has put under your authority. So whoever has his brother under his authority should feed him from what he eats and clothe him from what he wears. And do not charge them with work that is too much for them, and if you charge them, then assist them with it." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Notice how the Prophet ﷺ put the servant in the position of a brother in order to affirm in the Muslim's heart that when he wrongs that servant, treats him badly or deprives him of what is due to him, it is as if he did it to his brother. The Prophet ﷺ ordered good treatment and kindness to them, and to accord them the same dignity, food and clothing as those they serve. This is why *Abu Dharr* ؓ would give his servant an ornament similar to his

own. In this hadith, the Prophet ﷺ also prohibited giving servants more work than they can bear, which includes relieving them and giving them enough time to rest.

Abu Mas`ud al-Ansari* reported: "I used to beat a slave boy of mine with a whip. Then I heard a voice behind me saying, *'Know, Abu Mas`ud!' But due to my anger I did not understand the voice. When he approached me I saw it was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he was saying,

'Know, Abu Mas`ud!'

So I dropped the whip from my hand.

He ﷺ said, *'Know, Abu Mas`ud, that Allah, the Exalted, has more power over you than you have over this boy.'*

I said, 'I will never beat a slave after this.' "In another narration, he is quoted as saying, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he is free for the sake of Allah." The Prophet ﷺ said,

"If you had not done it you would have been afflicted by the Hellfire." (Muslim)

And the Prophet ﷺ said, "When someone slaps or beats his slave, its expiation is to free him." (Abu Dawud – graded saheeh by al-Albani)

The Prophet himself was one who saved the oppressed, freed slaves and stood up for the rights of servants and those who were humiliated. He would console them and revitalize their hearts.

Mu`awiyah ibn Suwayd ibn Muqrin reported: "I slapped one of our servants, so my father called him and called me. He told him, 'Take retribution from him. For indeed, we of *Bani Muqrin* were seven people at the time of the Messenger

of Allah ﷺ, and we had only one servant. One of us slapped her, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, *"Set her free."* They said, "But she is the only servant we have."

So, he said, *"Then she may serve you until you are no longer in need, and when you are no longer in need, free her."* (Muslim)

That was Muhammad ﷺ, and that was how he dealt with servants and slaves; so how do those who call for human rights today compare with such conduct?

Consider the practical example of how the Prophet treated his own servant. *Anas ibn Malik* ؓ said, "I served the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for ten years. By Allah, he never even said to me '*uff*,'[61] and he never said about anything I did, 'Why did you do it?' or about something I did not do, 'Why did you not do it?' " (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) And in another narration *Anas* ؓ said, "And he never found fault with anything I did." (Muslim)

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would say to a servant, *"Do you need anything?"* (Ahmad – graded saheeh by al-Albani) *Anas ibn Malik* ؓ reported that a slave woman of *Madinah* would take the hand of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, and he would not remove his hand from hers until she had taken him wherever she wanted in the city to show him what she needed. (Ibn Majah – graded saheeh by al-Albani)

[61] An expression of displeasure.

Forty-Second Encounter

The Prophet's Generosity

The Prophet ﷺ was unequalled in his generosity, liberality, open-handedness and leniency. His generosity was comprehensive and included all levels of giving, the highest of which is to offer one's life in the cause of Allahﷻ. He gave himself in fighting against the enemies of Allahﷻ and he was closest to the enemy during battle; only the bravest soldiers would stand beside him.

He ﷺ offered his knowledge and would teach his companions of what Allahﷻ had taught him. He was keen to teach them everything good and would be gentle with them when teaching.

He ﷺ said, *"Allah did not sent me to make difficulty or be difficult, but he sent me as a teacher, making things easy."* (Muslim)

And he said, *"I am to you in the position of a father, teaching you."* (Ahmad and Abu Dawud – graded as hasan by al-Albani) When a questioner asked him something, he would often reply with additional information. Someone once asked him about the purity of sea water, and he ﷺ said, *"Its water is pure and its creatures are permitted [to eat]."* (Ahmad and others)

He ﷺ was also the most generous of people in giving his time and foregoing his comfort in order to take care of the needs and interests of others. Sufficient is the aforementioned example of the slave woman in *Madinah* who would grasp his hand and take him wherever she

wanted in the city to show him what she needed. (Ibn Majah)

And *Jabir ibn `Abdullah* ﷺ reported: "Nothing was ever asked of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ that he refused." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Anas ﷺ reported: "Nothing was ever asked of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in exchange for acceptance of Islam but that he granted it. A man came to him and he gave him a valley full of sheep. So, he went back to his people and said, 'O people, accept Islam, for Muhammad ﷺ gives, not fearing poverty.' " (Muslim)

Anas ﷺ added, "Even if the man entered Islam only for worldly gain, it would soon become more beloved to him than the world and all it contained."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave *Sufwan ibn Umayyah* ﷺ three hundred grazing animals after the battle of *Hunayn*. *Sufwan* ﷺ later said, "By Allah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ gave what he gave me while he was the most hated of people to me, and he kept on giving me until he was the most beloved of people to me." (Muslim)

Ibn `Abbas said ﷺ, "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the most generous of people with goodness. And he was most generous of all during the month of *Ramadhan*, when *Jibreel* ﷺ met him and reviewed with him the *Qur'an*. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was swifter in good deeds than the wind." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Jubayr ibn Mut`im ﷺ said, "While we were with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ along with some people returning

from *Hunayn,* the Bedouins crowded around requesting from him until they pushed him to an acacia tree and snatched his cloak.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood and said,

"Return my cloak to me, for by Allah, if I had livestock as many as these bushes I would have divided them among you. And you will not find me miserly or a liar or a coward." (Al-Bukhari)

Generosity was part of the Prophet's ﷺ character even before his prophethood. When the angel came down to him in the cave of *Hiraa*' and he returned to *Khadijah* shaken, she told him, "No, by Allah. Allah will never humiliate you, for you keep the ties of relationship, bear the burden of the weak, help the needy and assist those afflicted by calamity."

Anas ﷺ reported, "The Prophet ﷺ never saved anything for tomorrow." (At-Tirmidhi – graded saheeh by al-Albani)

And *Abu Sa`eed* ﷺ related, Some people from the *Ansar* asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ for something, and he gave them what they asked. Then, they asked him again, and he gave them what they asked. Then, they asked him again, and he gave them what they asked - until finally, when what he had was finished,

he ﷺ said, *"Whatever I have I will never keep from you, but whoever refrains and seeks to be self-sufficient – Allah will make him self-sufficient, and whoever practices patience – Allah will give him patience. And no one has been given anything better for him and more ample than patience."* (Ahmad and Muslim)